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WITCHBLADE®

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9
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DIGITAL EDITION
US
TOP COW UNIVERSE®

WITCHBLADE®

created by **Marc Silvestri**, **David Wohl**, **Brian Haberlin** & **Michael Turner**

New York City Police Detective Sara Pezzini's life was forever fractured by her father's murder. Cold, cunning, and hellbent on revenge, Sara now stalks a vicious criminal cabal beneath the city. During a brutal warehouse massacre, Sara bonded with the Witchblade, an ancient weapon that transformed her into something wild, magnificent, and beyond her darkest imaginings.

Previously...Sara's search into the cover-up that destroyed her father and the supernatural forces surrounding her have led Sara to billionaire Kenneth Irons. Irons has money, power, and associates from the darkest corners of the underworld. In an epic confrontation, Irons transported Sara to a hidden arena where she was thrust into a life-or-death struggle against criminals, killers, and beings with abilities outside the natural world. With the help of the mysterious warrior, Ian Nottingham, Sara escaped and is lying low. While recovering from the battle, Sara jumps back into her police work, where Captain Joe Siry shares he was set to meet with an informant in the Franchetti crime family to get information on the family's human trafficking ties with the malevolent mastermind, Vinter. Sara jumps into action to get answers from the informant, but nnfortunately, Jackie Estacado gets to the informant first to eliminate him for betraying the family and beating his mistress. Sara arrives as Jackie is making his exit...

"Black Is The Color Of My True Love's Hair"

Written by **Marguerite Bennett**
Line art by **Giuseppe Cafaro**
Colors by **Arif Prianto**
Letters by **Troy Peteri**
Edits by **Marc Silvestri**, **Matt Hawkins** and **Ryan Cady**

Cover A: **Giuseppe Cafaro** and **Arif Prianto**
Cover B: **Raymond Gay** and **Arif Prianto**
Top Cow Store Foil Exclusive: **Raymond Gay** and **Arif Prianto**

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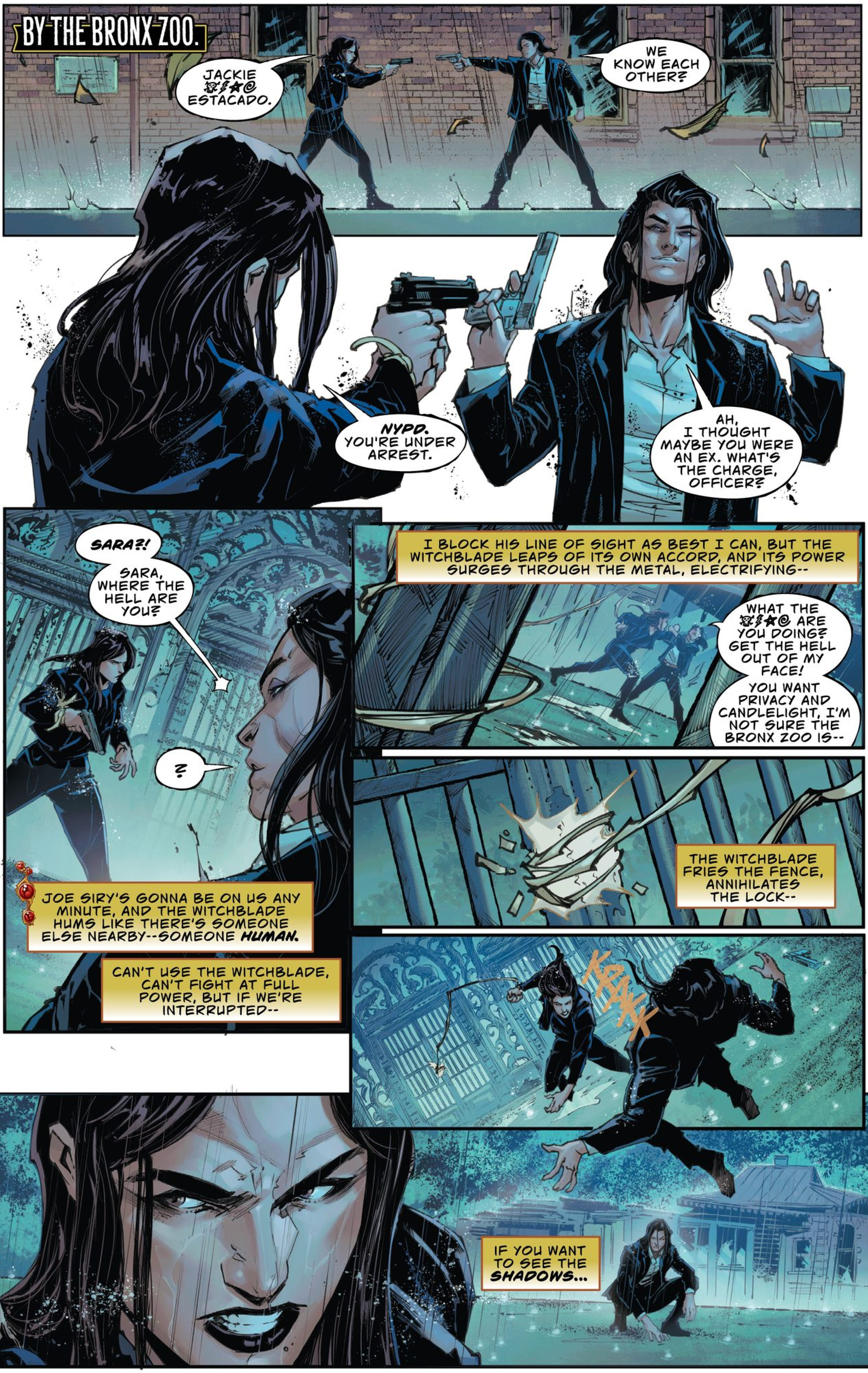
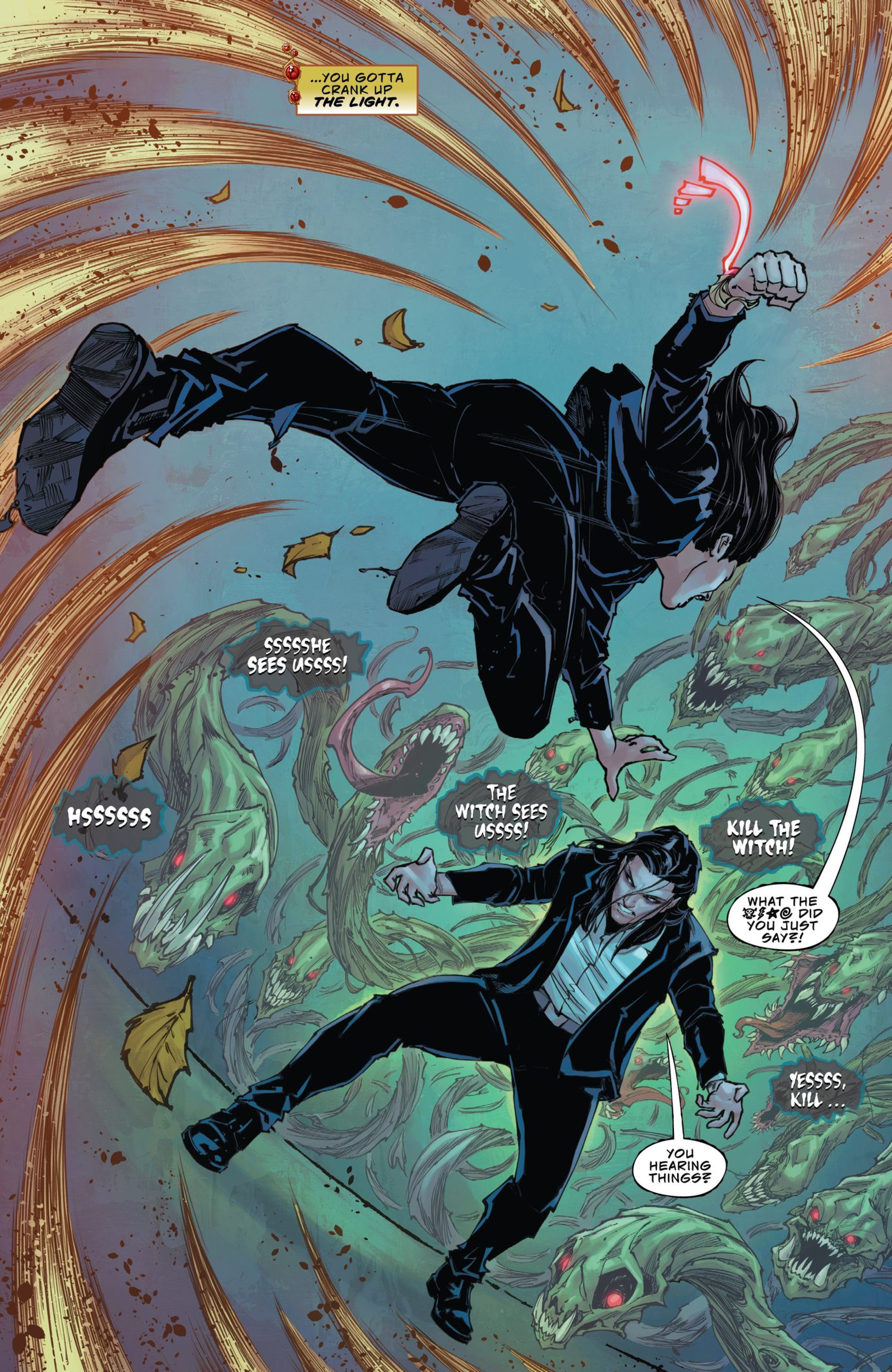
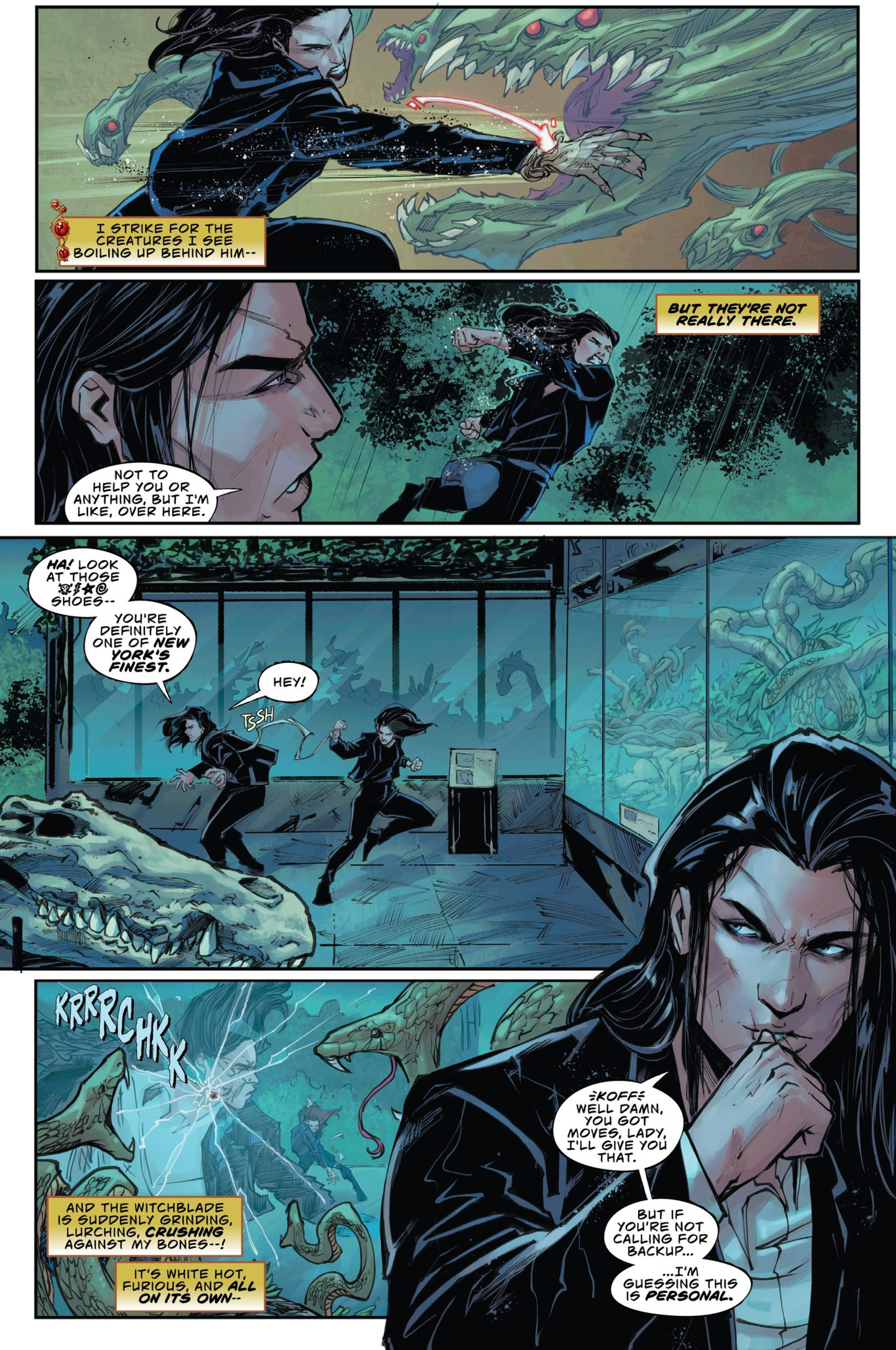
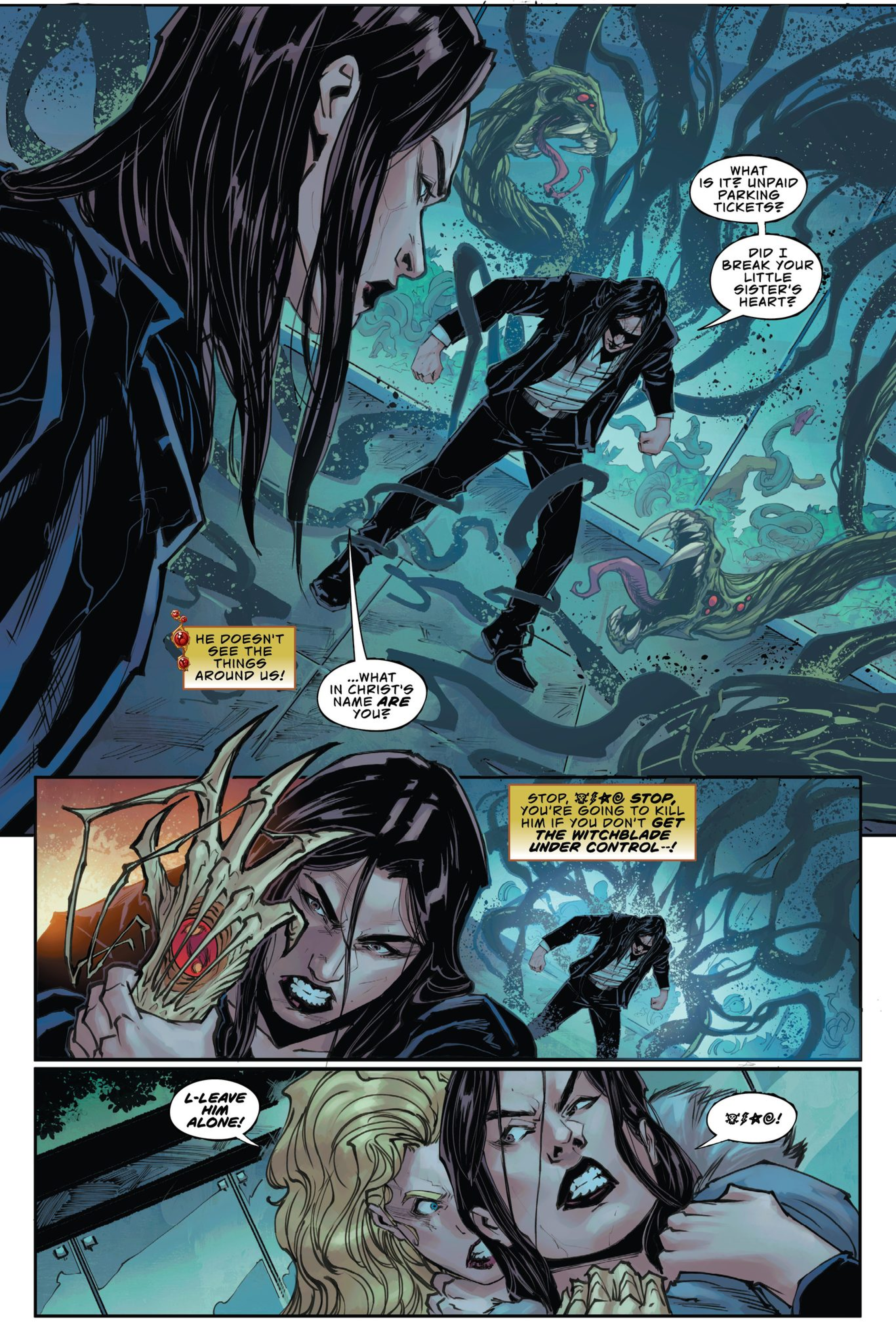
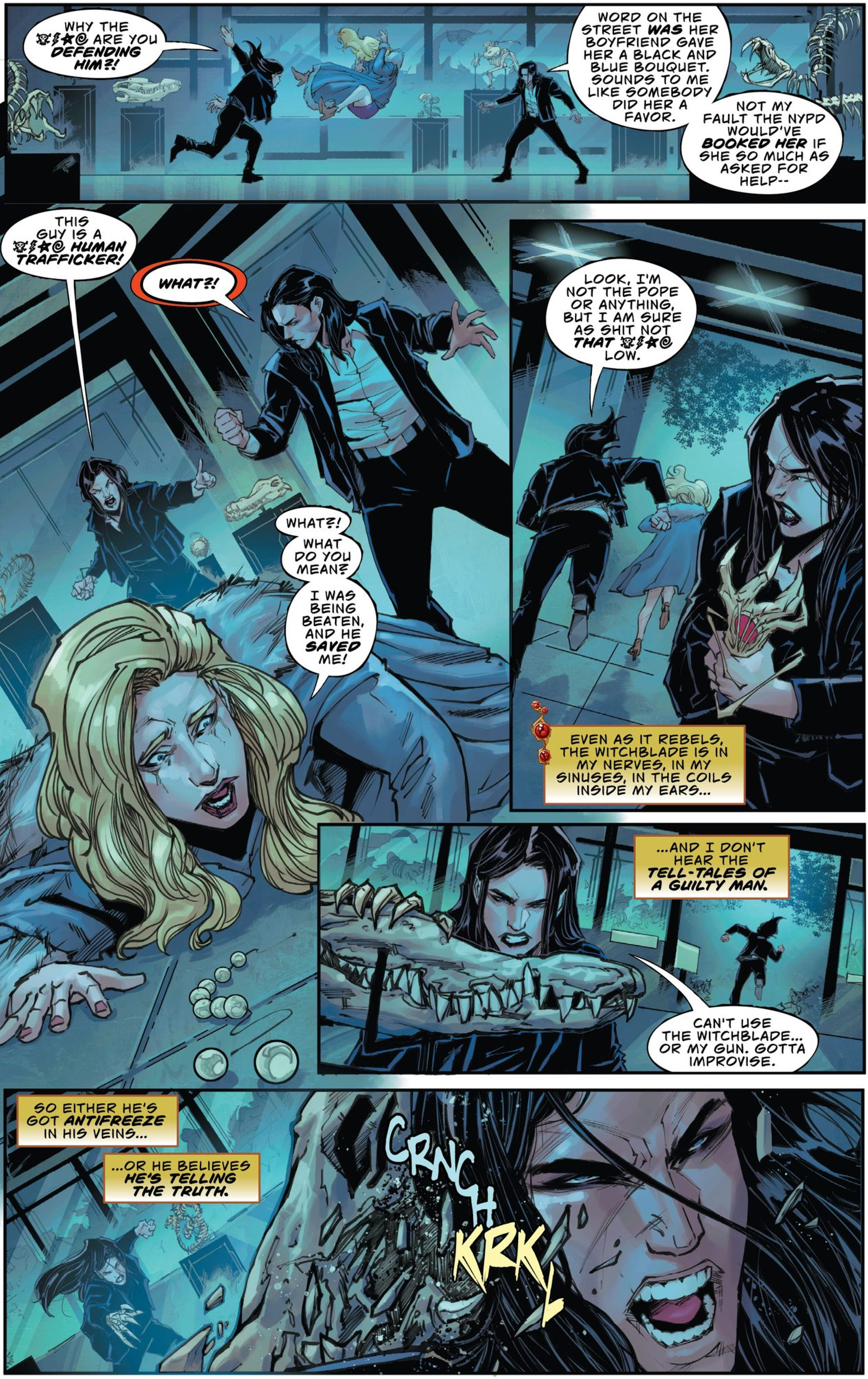
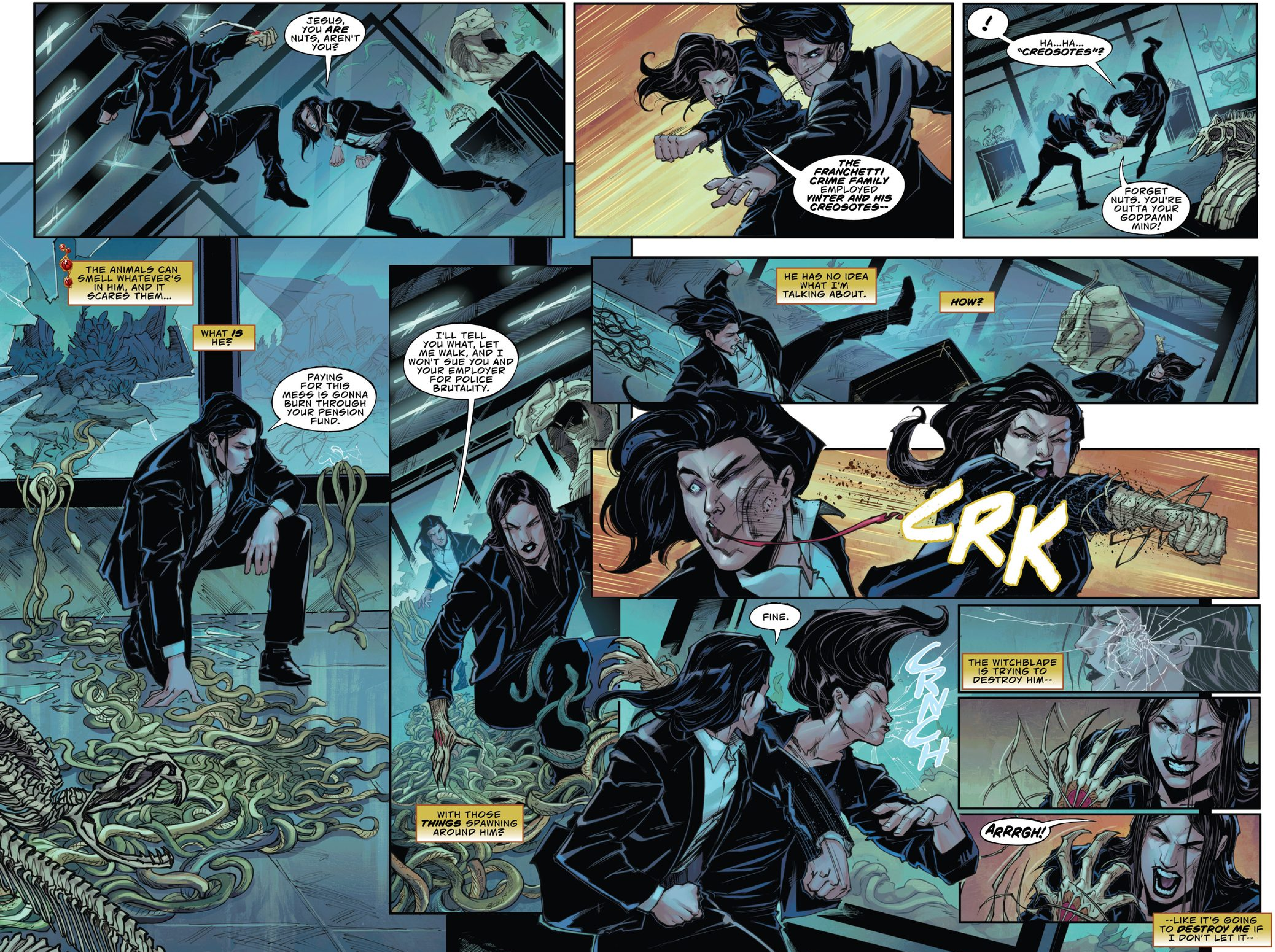

BY THE BRONX ZOO.
JACKIE ☠⚡★@ ESTACADO.
WE KNOW EACH OTHER?
NYPD. YOU'RE UNDER ARREST.
AH, I THOUGHT MAYBE YOU WERE AN EX. WHAT'S THE CHARGE, OFFICER?
SARA?!
SARA, WHERE THE HELL ARE YOU?
?
JOE SIRY'S GONNA BE ON US ANY MINUTE, AND THE WITCHBLADE HUMS LIKE THERE'S SOMEONE ELSE NEARBY--SOMEONE HUMAN.
CAN'T USE THE WITCHBLADE, CAN'T FIGHT AT FULL POWER, BUT IF WE'RE INTERRUPTED--
I BLOCK HIS LINE OF SIGHT AS BEST I CAN, BUT THE WITCHBLADE LEAPS OF ITS OWN ACCORD, AND ITS POWER SURGES THROUGH THE METAL, ELECTRIFYING--
WHAT THE ☠⚡★@ ARE YOU DOING? GET THE HELL OUT OF MY FACE!
YOU WANT PRIVACY AND CANDLELIGHT, I'M NOT SURE THE BRONX ZOO IS--
THE WITCHBLADE FRIES THE FENCE, ANNIHILATES THE LOCK--
KRAKK
IF YOU WANT TO SEE THE SHADOWS...

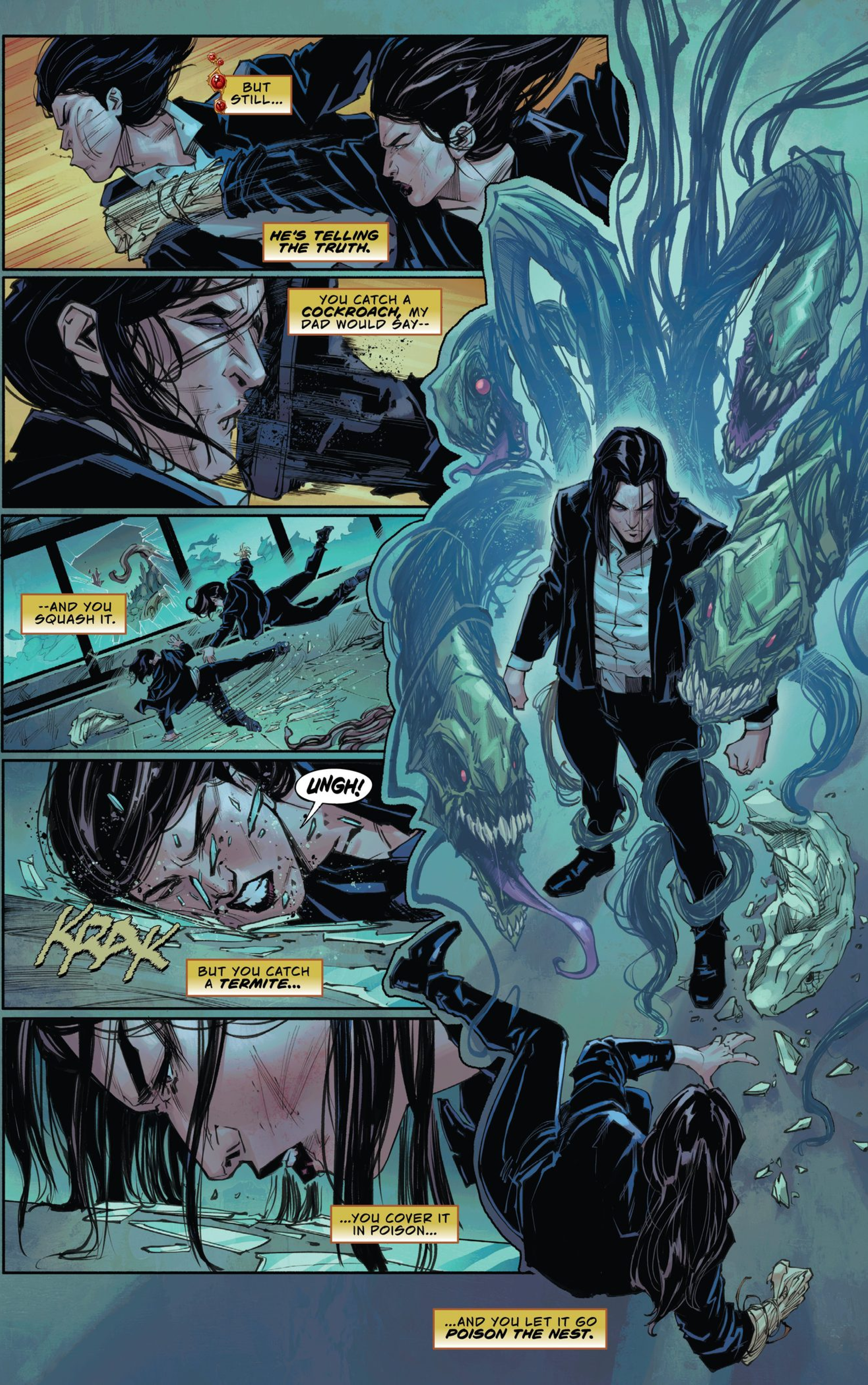

...YOU GOTTA CRANK UP *THE LIGHT.*
SSSSSHE SEES USSSS!
HSSSSSS
THE WITCH SEES USSSS!
KILL THE WITCH!
WHAT THE ☠⚡✪@ DID YOU JUST SAY?!
YESSSS, KILL ...
YOU HEARING THINGS?

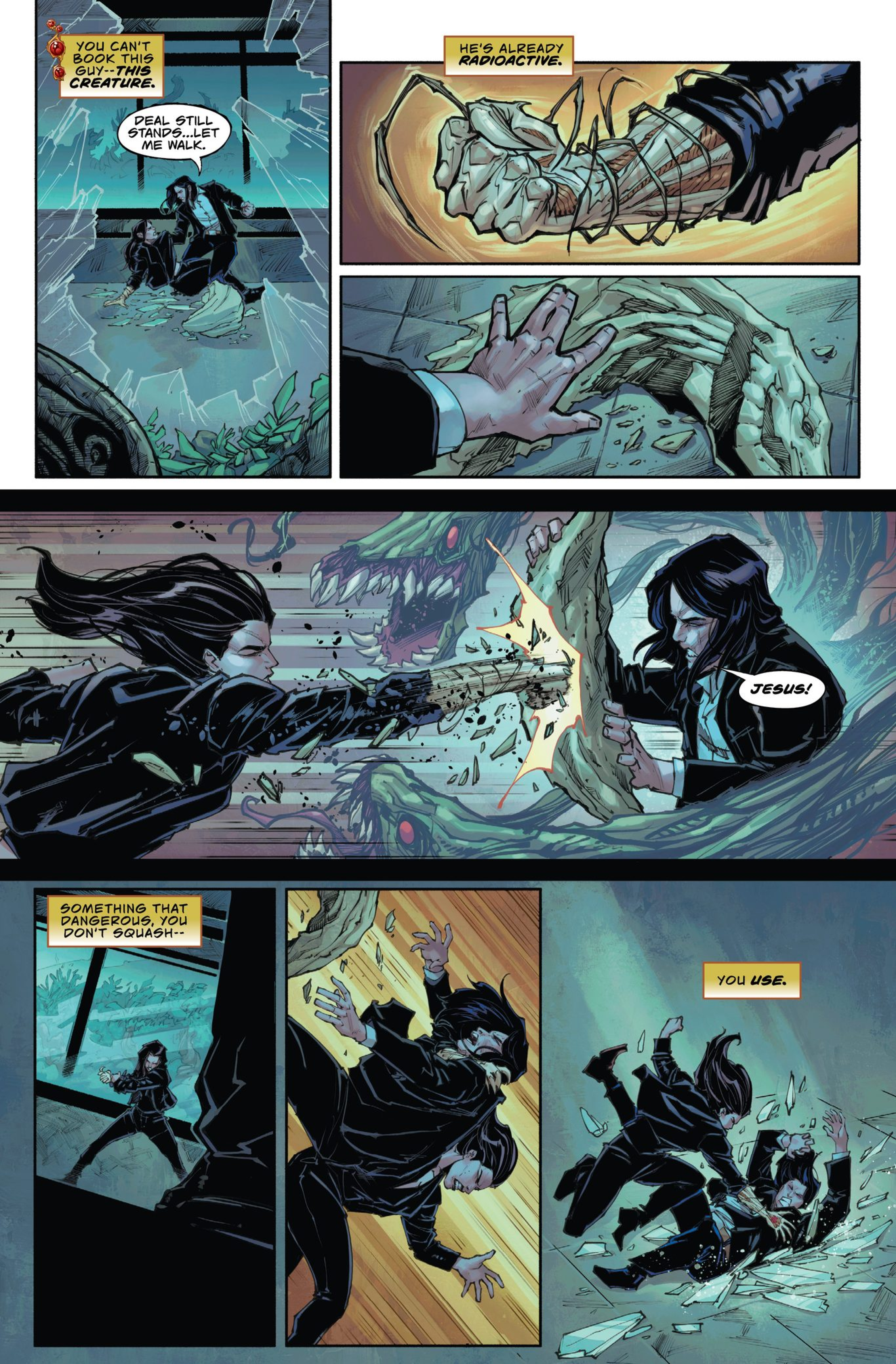

I STRIKE FOR THE CREATURES I SEE BOILING UP BEHIND HIM--
BUT THEY'RE NOT REALLY THERE.
NOT TO HELP YOU OR ANYTHING, BUT I'M LIKE, OVER HERE.
HA! LOOK AT THOSE ☠⚡★@ SHOES--
YOU'RE DEFINITELY ONE OF NEW YORK'S FINEST.
HEY!
TSSH
KRRRCHKK
=KOFF= WELL DAMN, YOU GOT MOVES, LADY, I'LL GIVE YOU THAT.
BUT IF YOU'RE NOT CALLING FOR BACKUP...
...I'M GUESSING THIS IS PERSONAL.
AND THE WITCHBLADE IS SUDDENLY GRINDING, LURCHING, CRUSHING AGAINST MY BONES--!
IT'S WHITE HOT, FURIOUS, AND ALL ON ITS OWN--

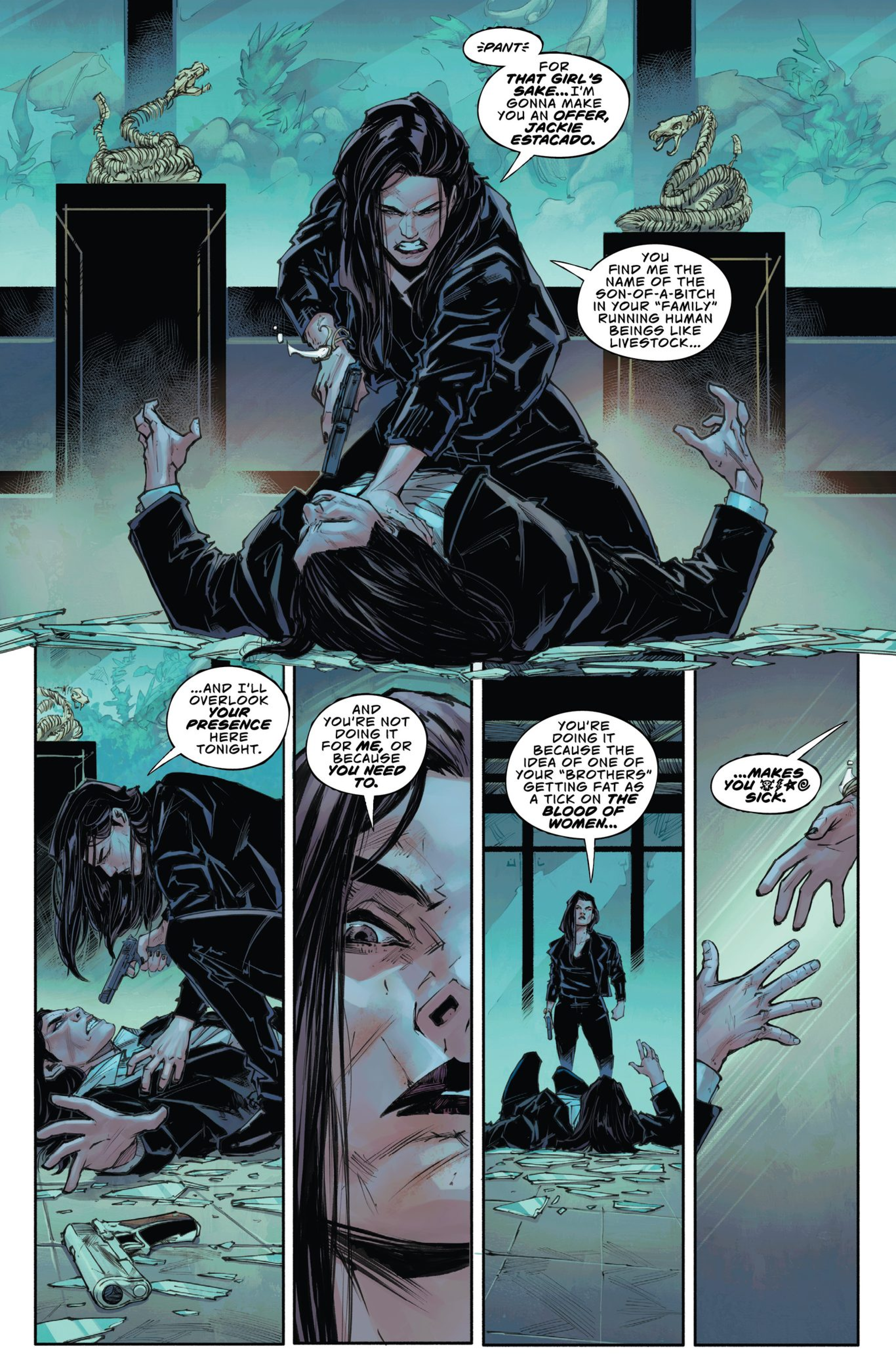

WHAT IS IT? UNPAID PARKING TICKETS?
DID I BREAK YOUR LITTLE SISTER'S HEART?
HE DOESN'T SEE THE THINGS AROUND US!
...WHAT IN CHRIST'S NAME ARE YOU?
STOP, ☠⚡★@ STOP, YOU'RE GOING TO KILL HIM IF YOU DON'T GET THE WITCHBLADE UNDER CONTROL--!
L-LEAVE HIM ALONE!
☠⚡★@!


WHY THE ☠⚡✪@ ARE YOU **DEFENDING HIM?!**
WORD ON THE STREET **WAS** HER BOYFRIEND GAVE HER A BLACK AND BLUE BOUQUET. SOUNDS TO ME LIKE SOMEBODY DID HER A FAVOR.
NOT MY FAULT THE NYPD WOULD'VE **BOOKED HER** IF SHE SO MUCH AS ASKED FOR HELP--
THIS GUY IS A ☠⚡✪@ **HUMAN TRAFFICKER!**
WHAT?!
WHAT?! WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
I WAS BEING BEATEN, AND HE **SAVED** ME!
LOOK, I'M NOT THE POPE OR ANYTHING, BUT I AM SURE AS SHIT NOT **THAT** ☠⚡✪@ LOW.
EVEN AS IT REBELS, THE WITCHBLADE IS IN MY NERVES, IN MY SINUSES, IN THE COILS INSIDE MY EARS...
...AND I DON'T HEAR THE **TELL-TALES OF A GUILTY MAN.**
CAN'T USE THE WITCHBLADE... OR MY GUN. GOTTA IMPROVISE.
SO EITHER HE'S GOT **ANTIFREEZE** IN HIS VEINS...
...OR HE BELIEVES **HE'S TELLING THE TRUTH.**
CRNCH
KRKL

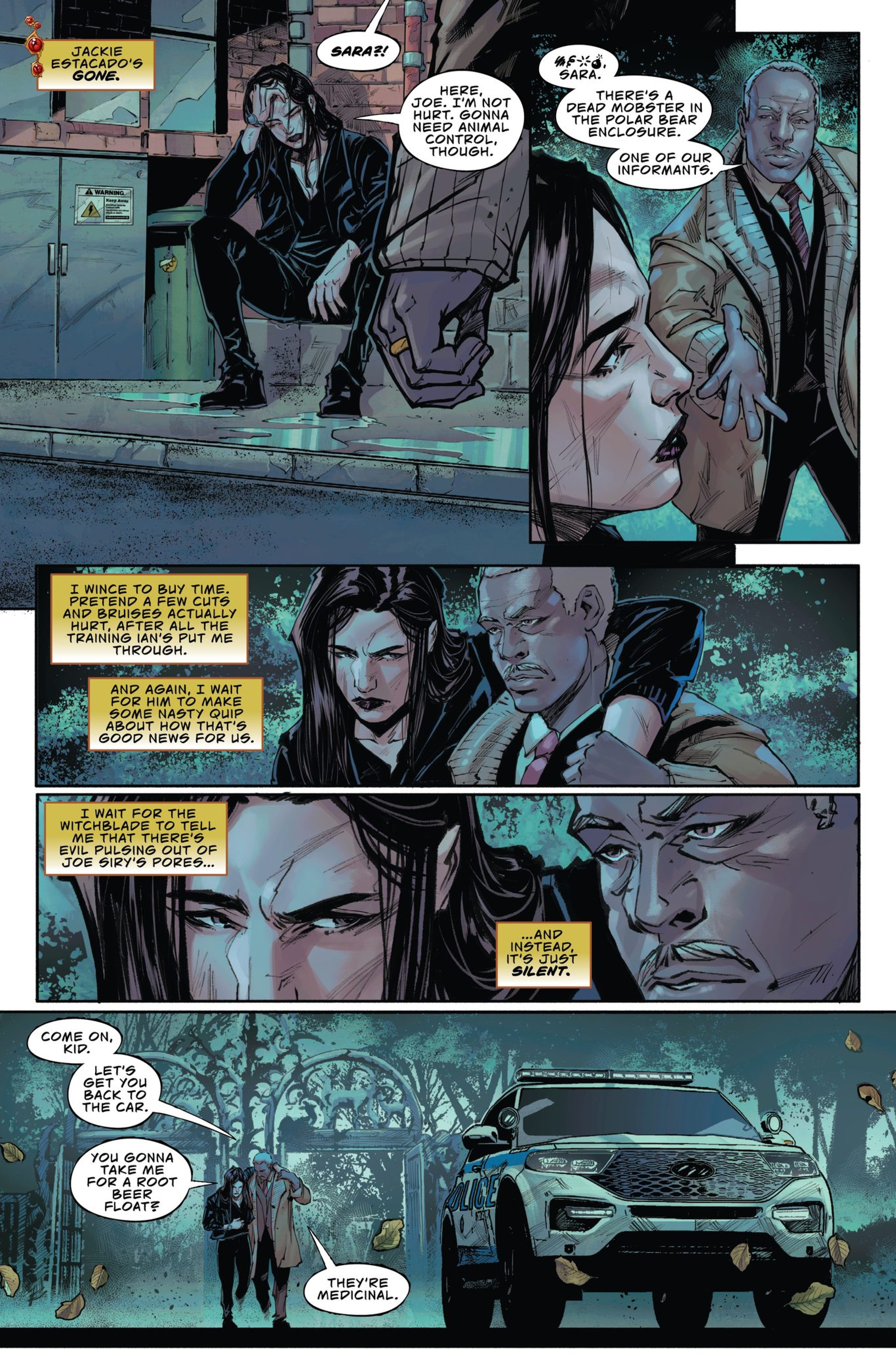

JESUS, YOU **ARE** NUTS, AREN'T YOU?
THE FRANCHETTI CRIME FAMILY EMPLOYED **VINTER AND HIS CREOSOTES--**
!
HA...HA... **"CREOSOTES"?**
FORGET NUTS. YOU'RE OUTTA YOUR GODDAMN MIND!
THE ANIMALS CAN SMELL WHATEVER'S IN HIM, AND IT SCARES THEM...
WHAT **IS** HE?
PAYING FOR THIS MESS IS GONNA BURN THROUGH YOUR PENSION FUND.
I'LL TELL YOU WHAT, LET ME WALK, AND I WON'T SUE YOU AND YOUR EMPLOYER FOR POLICE BRUTALITY.
WITH THOSE **THINGS** SPAWNING AROUND HIM?
HE HAS NO IDEA WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT.
HOW?
CRK
FINE.
CRNCH
THE WITCHBLADE IS TRYING TO DESTROY HIM--
ARRRGH!
--LIKE IT'S GOING TO **DESTROY ME** IF I DON'T LET IT--

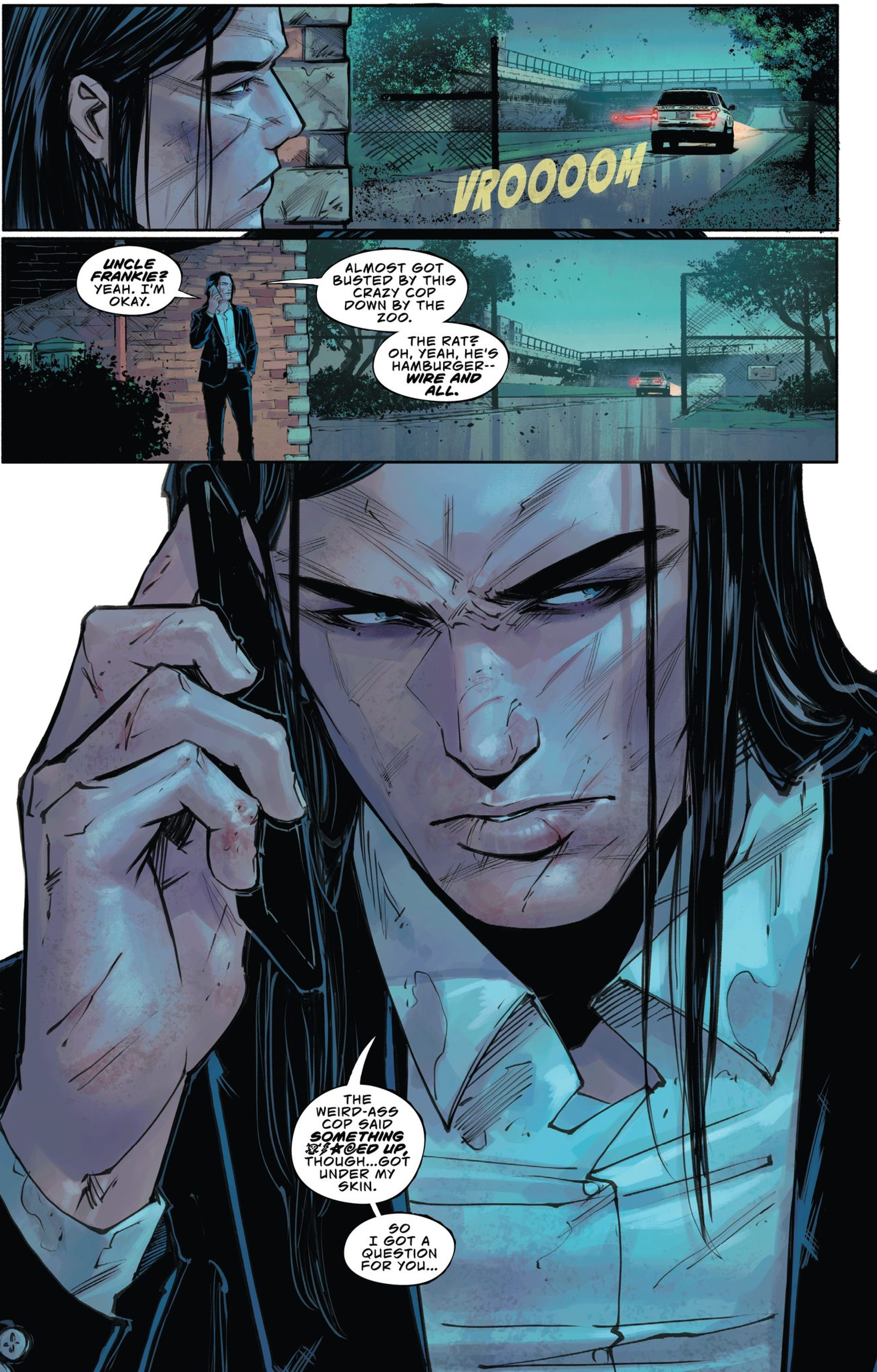

BUT STILL...
HE'S TELLING THE TRUTH.
YOU CATCH A COCKROACH, MY DAD WOULD SAY--
--AND YOU SQUASH IT.
UNGH!
KRAK
BUT YOU CATCH A TERMITE...
...YOU COVER IT IN POISON...
...AND YOU LET IT GO POISON THE NEST.

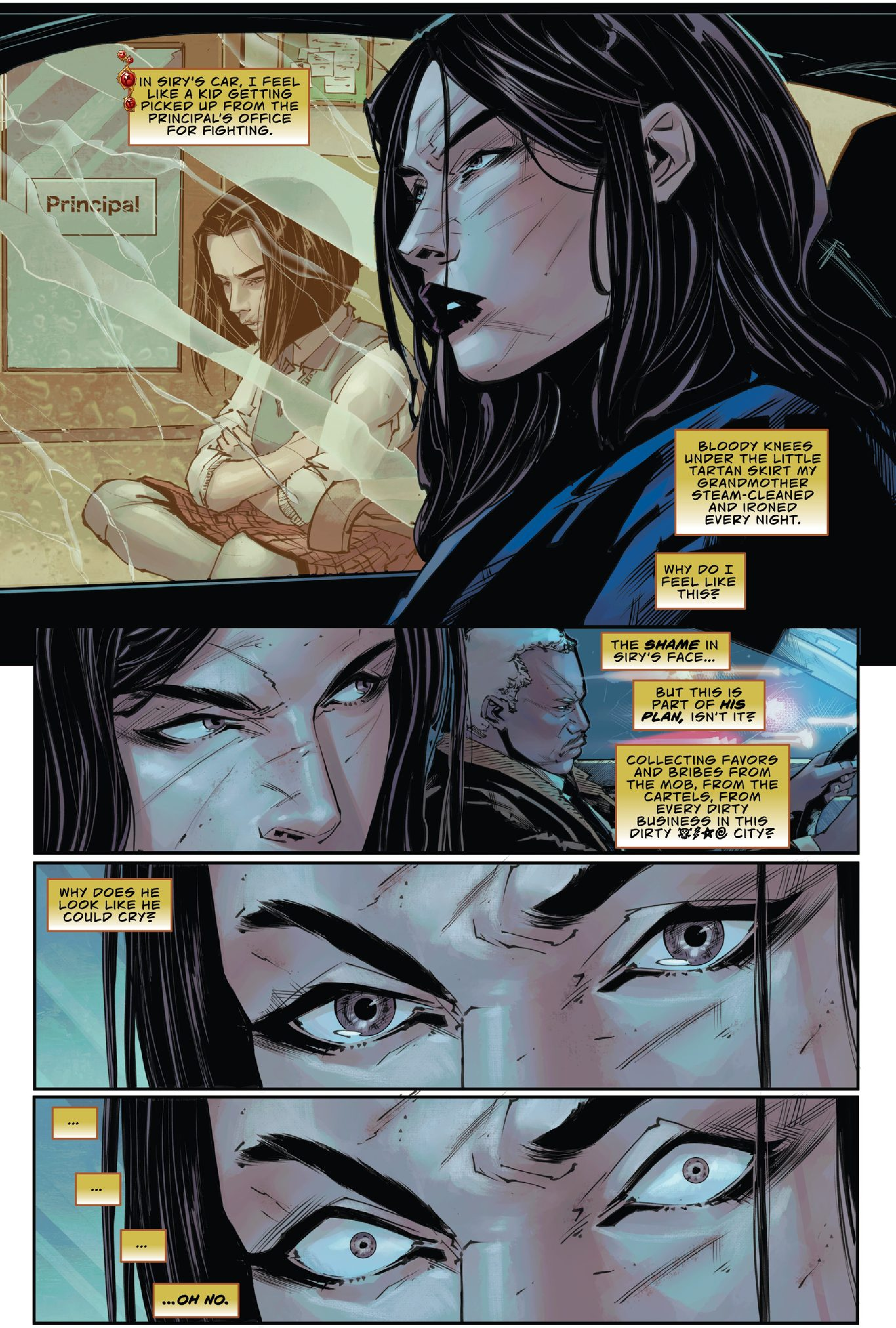

YOU CAN'T BOOK THIS GUY--*THIS CREATURE.*
DEAL STILL STANDS...LET ME WALK.
HE'S ALREADY *RADIOACTIVE.*
JESUS!
SOMETHING THAT DANGEROUS, YOU DON'T SQUASH--
YOU *USE.*

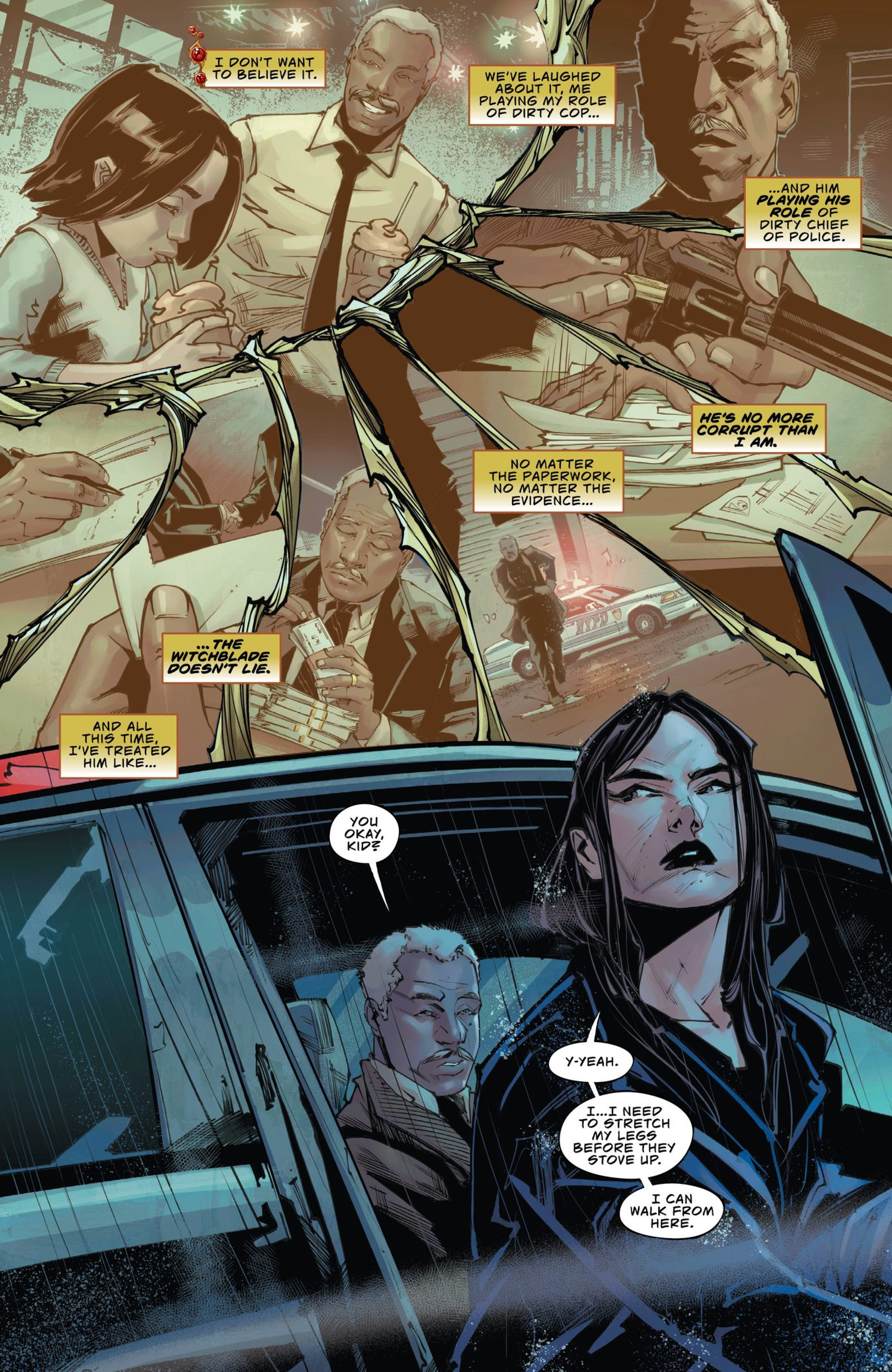


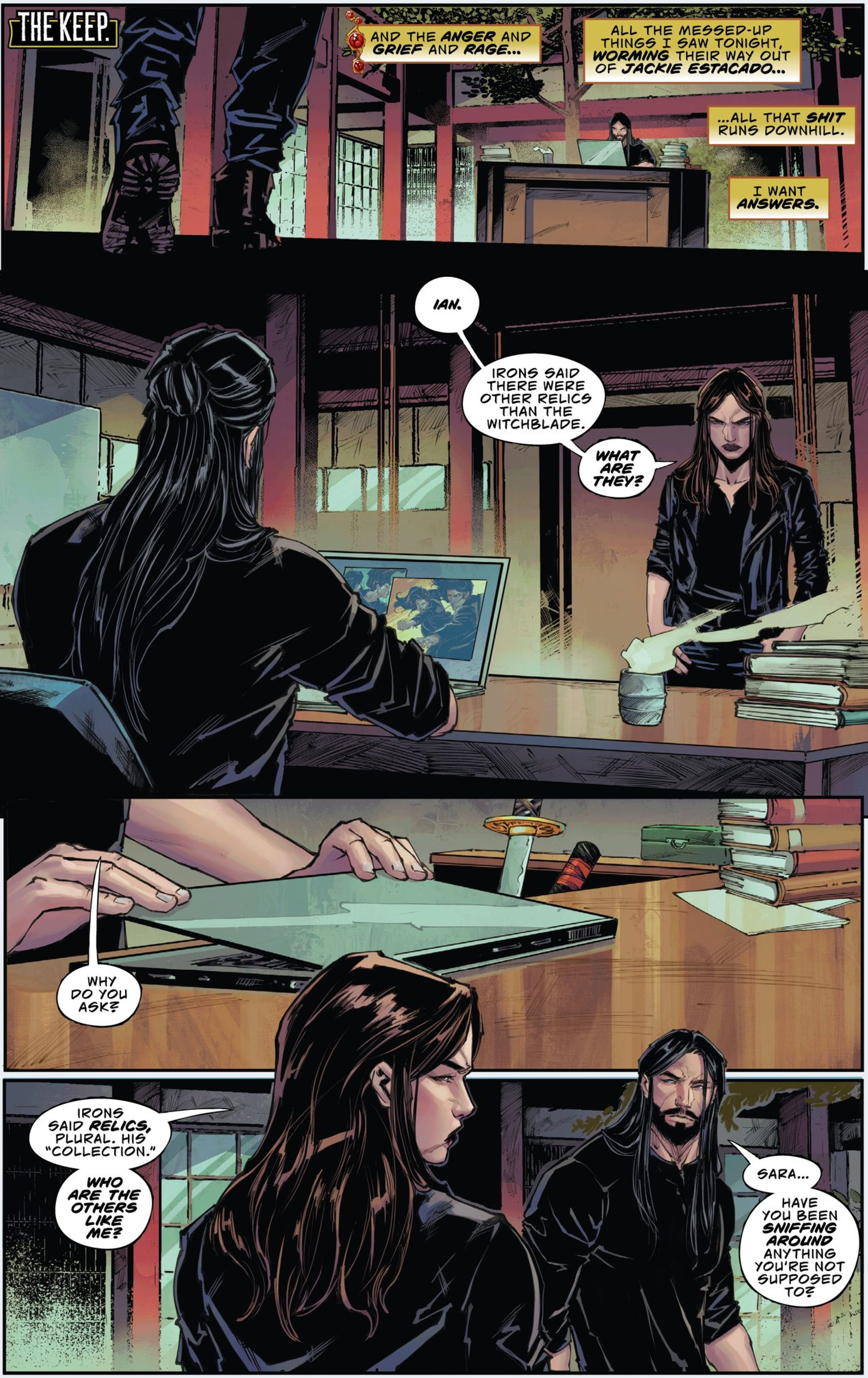
PANT
FOR **THAT GIRL'S SAKE**...I'M GONNA MAKE YOU AN **OFFER, JACKIE ESTACADO.**
YOU FIND ME THE NAME OF THE SON-OF-A-BITCH IN YOUR "FAMILY" RUNNING HUMAN BEINGS LIKE LIVESTOCK...
...AND I'LL OVERLOOK **YOUR PRESENCE** HERE TONIGHT.
AND YOU'RE NOT DOING IT FOR **ME,** OR BECAUSE **YOU NEED TO.**
YOU'RE DOING IT BECAUSE THE IDEA OF ONE OF YOUR "BROTHERS" GETTING FAT AS A TICK ON **THE BLOOD OF WOMEN...**
...MAKES YOU ☠ϟ★@ SICK.

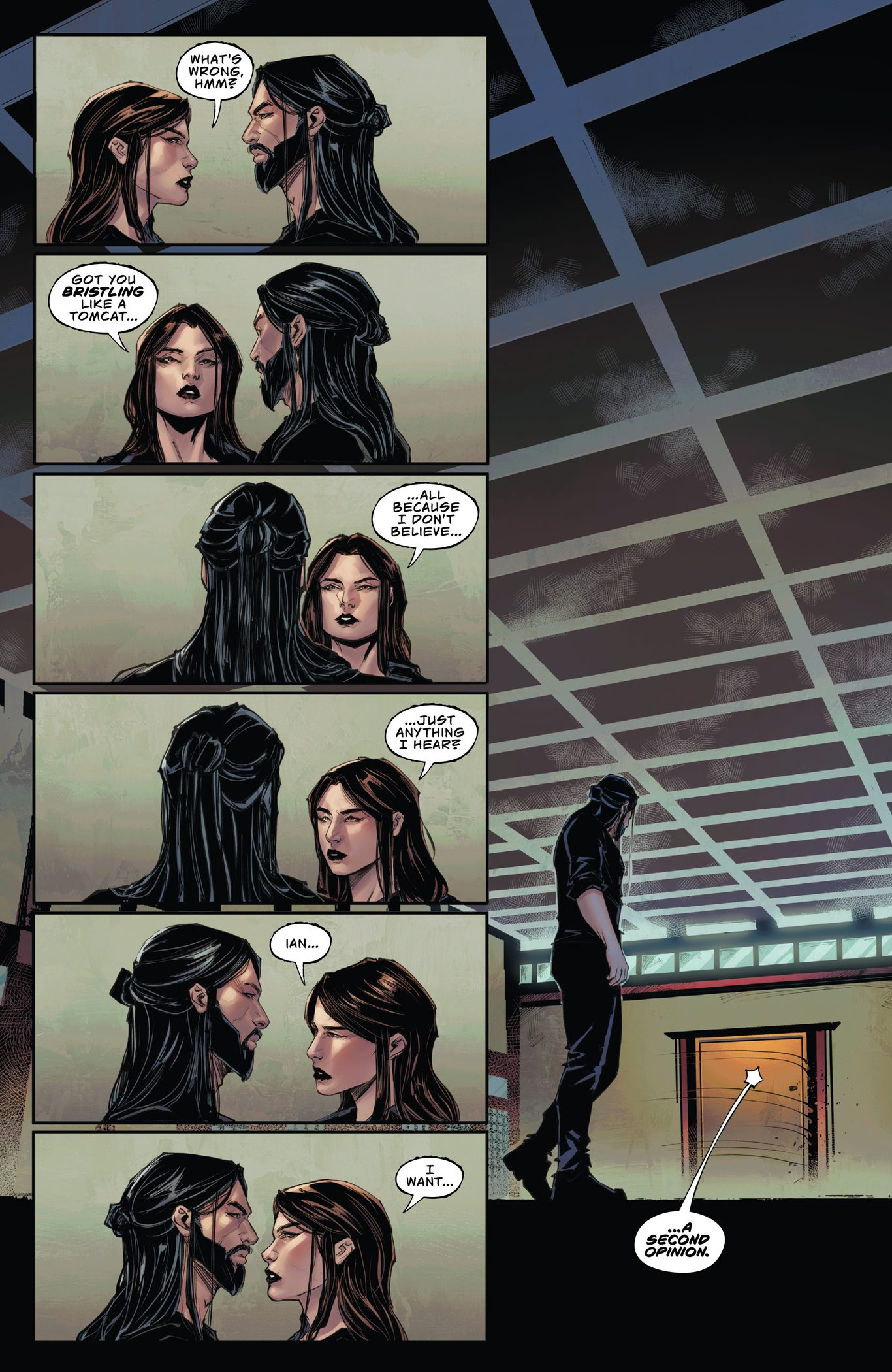

JACKIE ESTACADO'S **GONE.**
SARA?!
HERE, JOE. I'M NOT HURT. GONNA NEED ANIMAL CONTROL, THOUGH.
#$*💣, SARA.
THERE'S A DEAD MOBSTER IN THE POLAR BEAR ENCLOSURE.
ONE OF OUR INFORMANTS.
WARNING
Keep Away
I WINCE TO BUY TIME. PRETEND A FEW CUTS AND BRUISES ACTUALLY HURT, AFTER ALL THE TRAINING IAN'S PUT ME THROUGH.
AND AGAIN, I WAIT FOR HIM TO MAKE SOME NASTY QUIP ABOUT HOW THAT'S GOOD NEWS FOR US.
I WAIT FOR THE WITCHBLADE TO TELL ME THAT THERE'S EVIL PULSING OUT OF JOE SIRY'S PORES...
...AND INSTEAD, IT'S JUST ***SILENT.***
COME ON, KID.
LET'S GET YOU BACK TO THE CAR.
YOU GONNA TAKE ME FOR A ROOT BEER FLOAT?
THEY'RE MEDICINAL.
POLICE

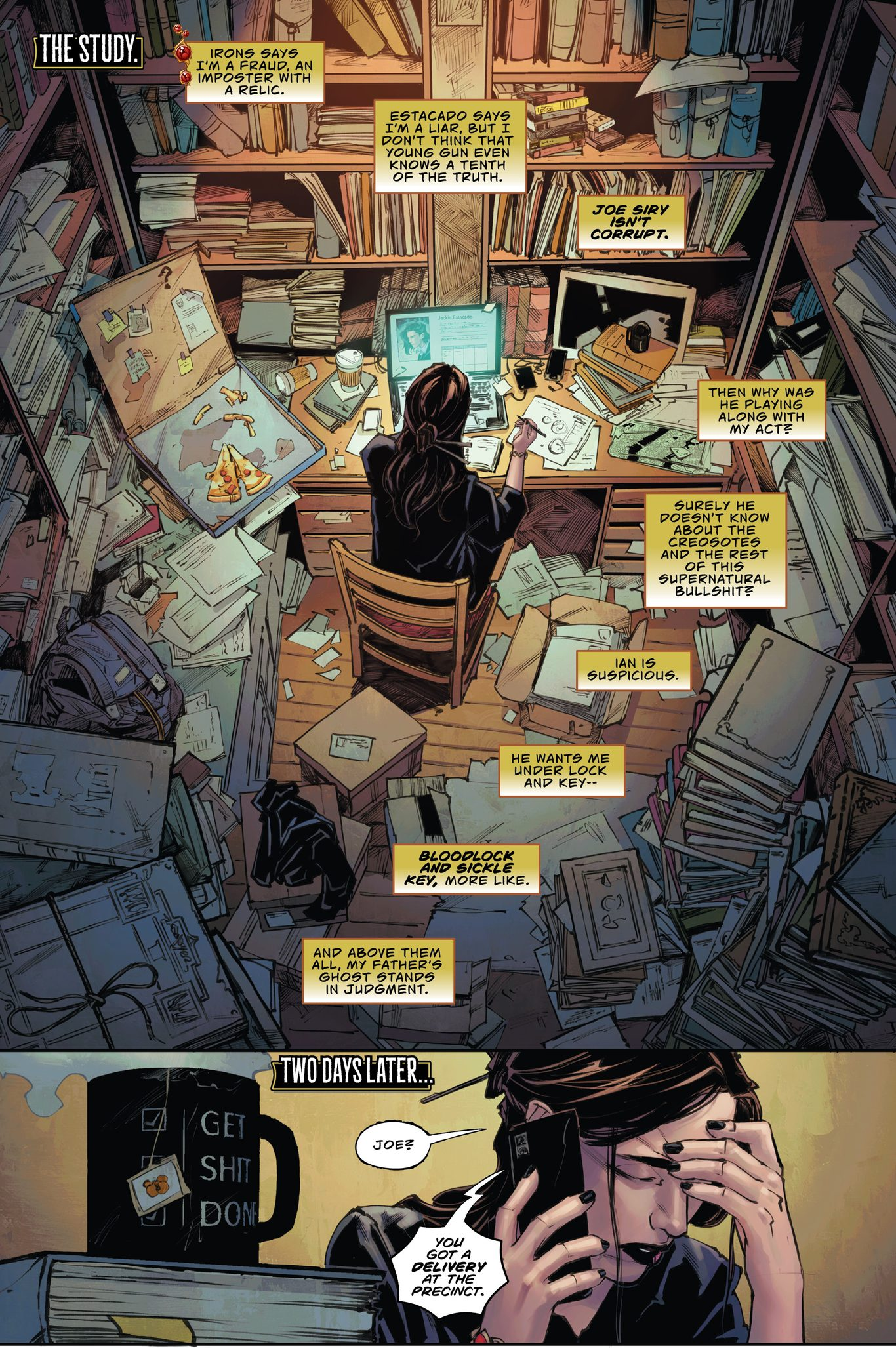

VROOOOM
UNCLE FRANKIE? YEAH. I'M OKAY.
ALMOST GOT BUSTED BY THIS CRAZY COP DOWN BY THE ZOO.
THE RAT? OH, YEAH, HE'S HAMBURGER-- ***WIRE AND ALL.***
THE WEIRD-ASS COP SAID ***SOMETHING ☠⚡★@ED UP,*** THOUGH...GOT UNDER MY SKIN.
SO I GOT A QUESTION FOR YOU...

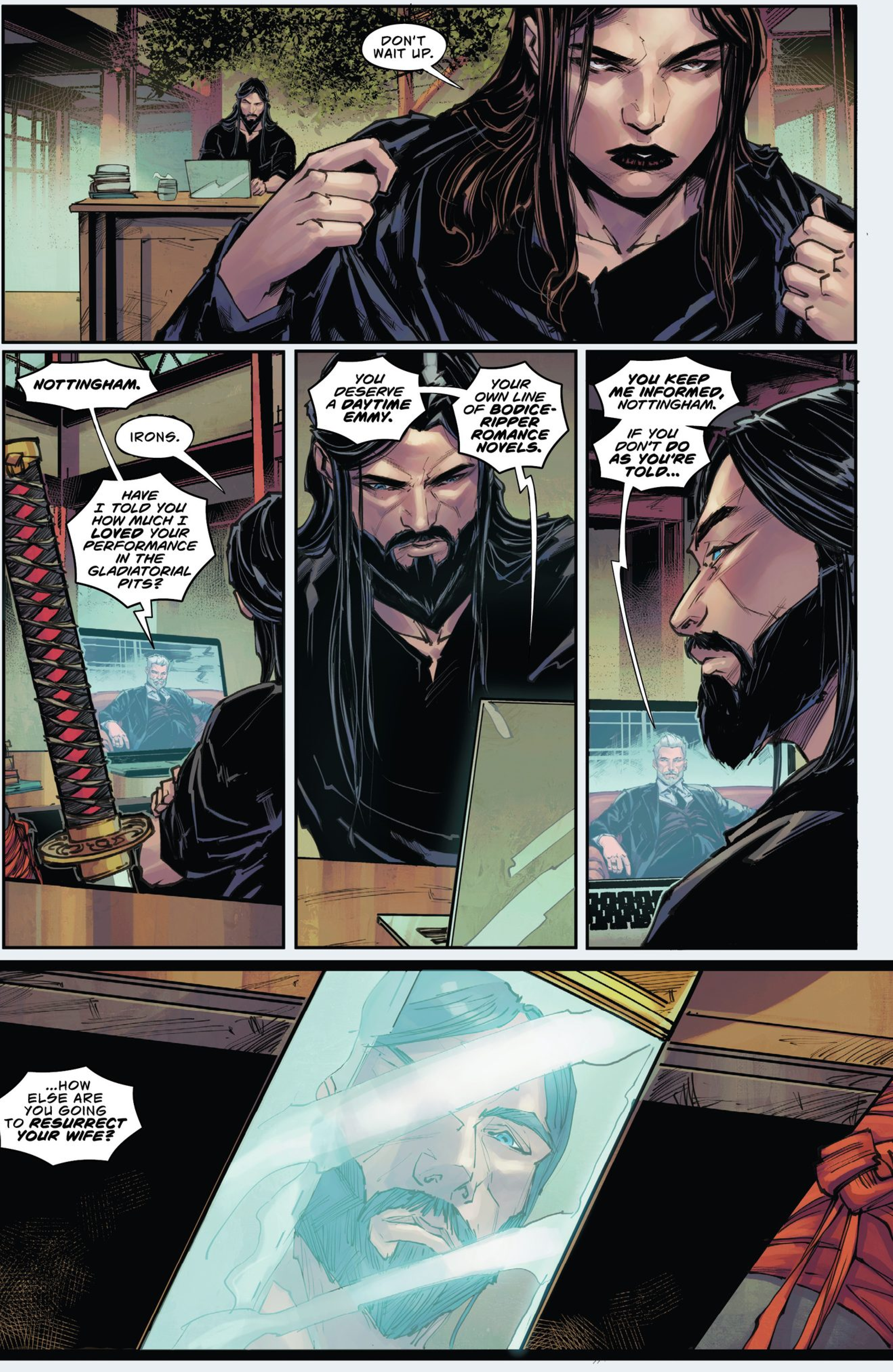

IN SIRY'S CAR, I FEEL LIKE A KID GETTING PICKED UP FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE FOR FIGHTING.
Principal
BLOODY KNEES UNDER THE LITTLE TARTAN SKIRT MY GRANDMOTHER STEAM-CLEANED AND IRONED EVERY NIGHT.
WHY DO I FEEL LIKE THIS?
THE *SHAME* IN SIRY'S FACE...
BUT THIS IS PART OF *HIS PLAN,* ISN'T IT?
COLLECTING FAVORS AND BRIBES FROM THE MOB, FROM THE CARTELS, FROM EVERY DIRTY BUSINESS IN THIS DIRTY ☠⚡★@ CITY?
WHY DOES HE LOOK LIKE HE COULD CRY?
...
...
...
...*OH NO.*

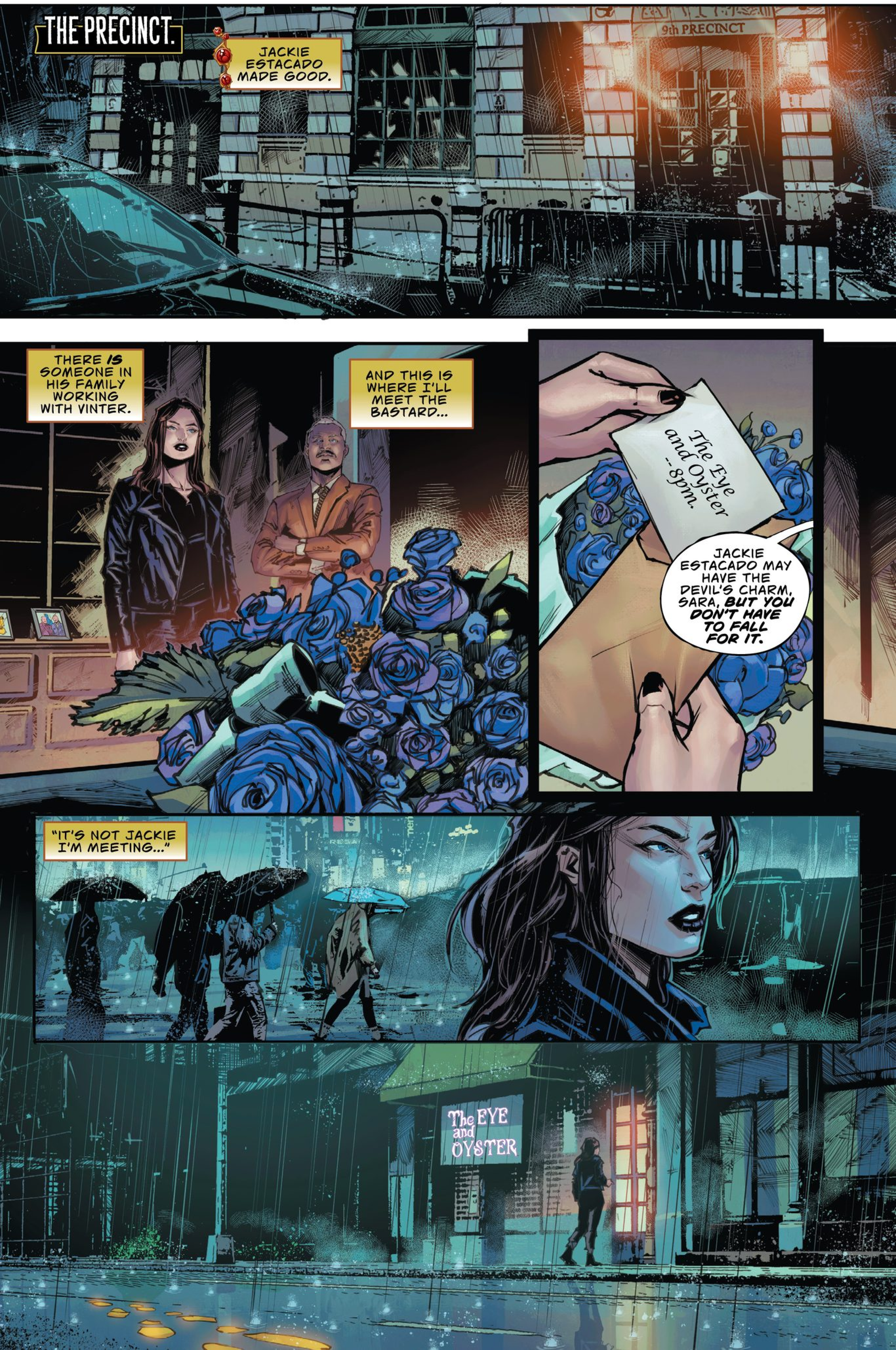

I DON'T WANT TO BELIEVE IT.
WE'VE LAUGHED ABOUT IT, ME PLAYING MY ROLE OF DIRTY COP...
...AND HIM *PLAYING HIS ROLE* OF DIRTY CHIEF OF POLICE.
HE'S NO MORE CORRUPT THAN I AM.
NO MATTER THE PAPERWORK, NO MATTER THE EVIDENCE...
...THE WITCHBLADE DOESN'T LIE.
AND ALL THIS TIME, I'VE TREATED HIM LIKE...
NYPD
YOU OKAY, KID?
Y-YEAH.
I...I NEED TO STRETCH MY LEGS BEFORE THEY STOVE UP.
I CAN WALK FROM HERE.

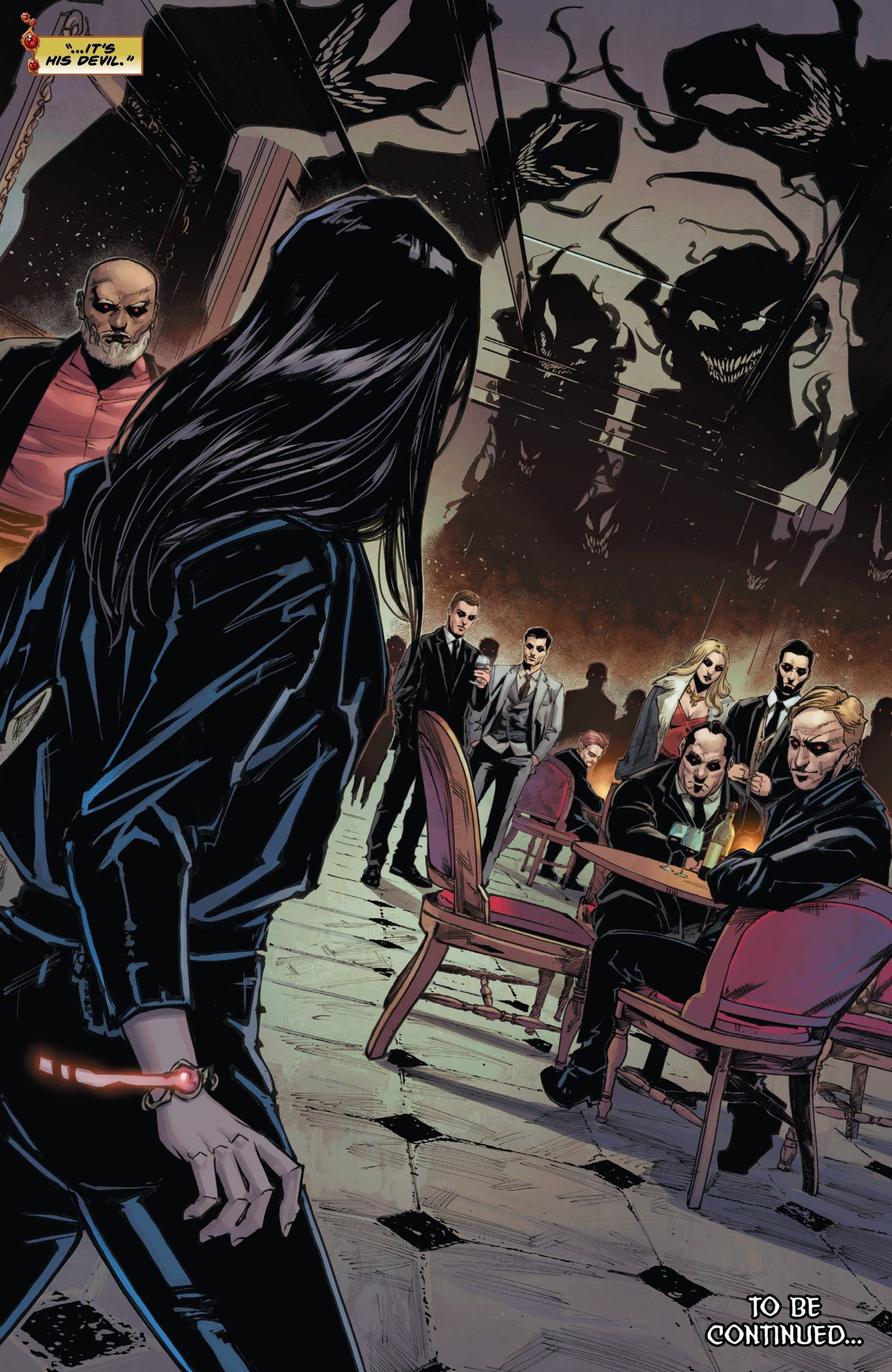

THE KEEP.
AND THE *ANGER* AND *GRIEF* AND *RAGE*...
ALL THE MESSED-UP THINGS I SAW TONIGHT, *WORMING* THEIR WAY OUT OF *JACKIE ESTACADO*...
...ALL THAT *SHIT* RUNS DOWNHILL.
I WANT *ANSWERS*.
IAN.
IRONS SAID THERE WERE OTHER RELICS THAN THE WITCHBLADE.
WHAT ARE THEY?
WHY DO YOU ASK?
IRONS SAID *RELICS*, PLURAL. HIS "COLLECTION."
WHO ARE THE OTHERS LIKE ME?
SARA...
HAVE YOU BEEN *SNIFFING AROUND* ANYTHING YOU'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO?


WHAT'S WRONG, HMM?
GOT YOU **BRISTLING** LIKE A TOMCAT...
...ALL BECAUSE I DON'T BELIEVE...
...JUST ANYTHING I HEAR?
IAN...
I WANT...
...A SECOND OPINION.


THE STUDY.
IRONS SAYS I'M A FRAUD, AN IMPOSTER WITH A RELIC.
ESTACADO SAYS I'M A LIAR, BUT I DON'T THINK THAT YOUNG GUN EVEN KNOWS A TENTH OF THE TRUTH.
JOE SIRY ISN'T CORRUPT.
Jackie Estacado
THEN WHY WAS HE PLAYING ALONG WITH MY ACT?
SURELY HE DOESN'T KNOW ABOUT THE CREOSOTES AND THE REST OF THIS SUPERNATURAL BULLSHIT?
IAN IS SUSPICIOUS.
HE WANTS ME UNDER LOCK AND KEY--
BLOODLOCK AND SICKLE KEY, MORE LIKE.
AND ABOVE THEM ALL, MY FATHER'S GHOST STANDS IN JUDGMENT.
TWO DAYS LATER...
GET SHIT DON
JOE?
YOU GOT A DELIVERY AT THE PRECINCT.

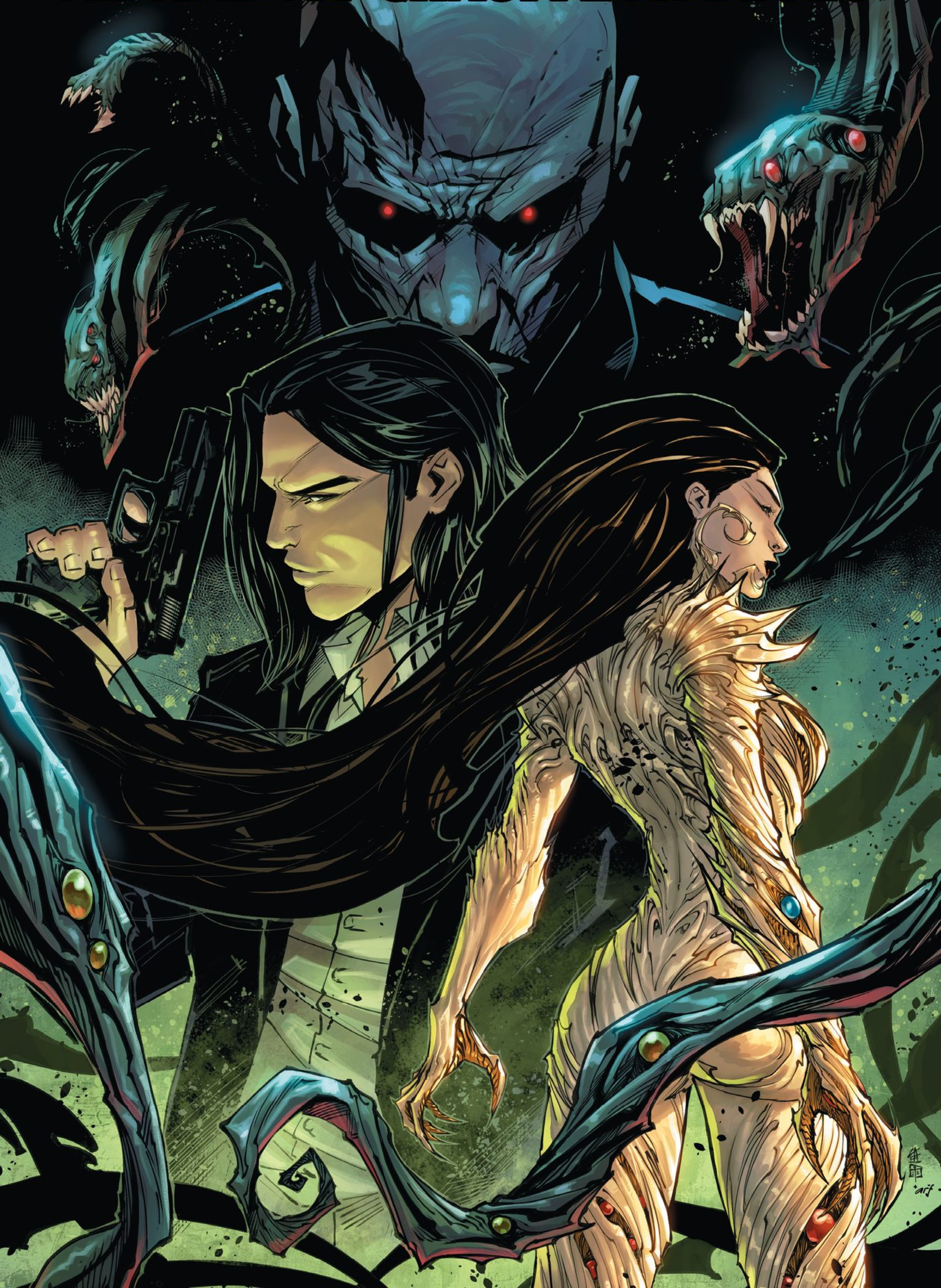

DON'T WAIT UP.
NOTTINGHAM.
IRONS.
HAVE I TOLD YOU HOW MUCH I LOVED YOUR PERFORMANCE IN THE GLADIATORIAL PITS?
YOU DESERVE A DAYTIME EMMY.
YOUR OWN LINE OF BODICE-RIPPER ROMANCE NOVELS.
YOU KEEP ME INFORMED, NOTTINGHAM.
IF YOU DON'T DO AS YOU'RE TOLD...
...HOW ELSE ARE YOU GOING TO RESURRECT YOUR WIFE?


THE PRECINCT.
9th PRECINCT
JACKIE ESTACADO MADE GOOD.
THERE *IS* SOMEONE IN HIS FAMILY WORKING WITH VINTER.
AND THIS IS WHERE I'LL MEET THE BASTARD...
The Eye and Oyster ..8pm.
JACKIE ESTACADO MAY HAVE THE DEVIL'S CHARM, SARA, ***BUT YOU DON'T HAVE TO FALL FOR IT.***
"IT'S NOT JACKIE I'M MEETING..."
The EYE and OYSTER

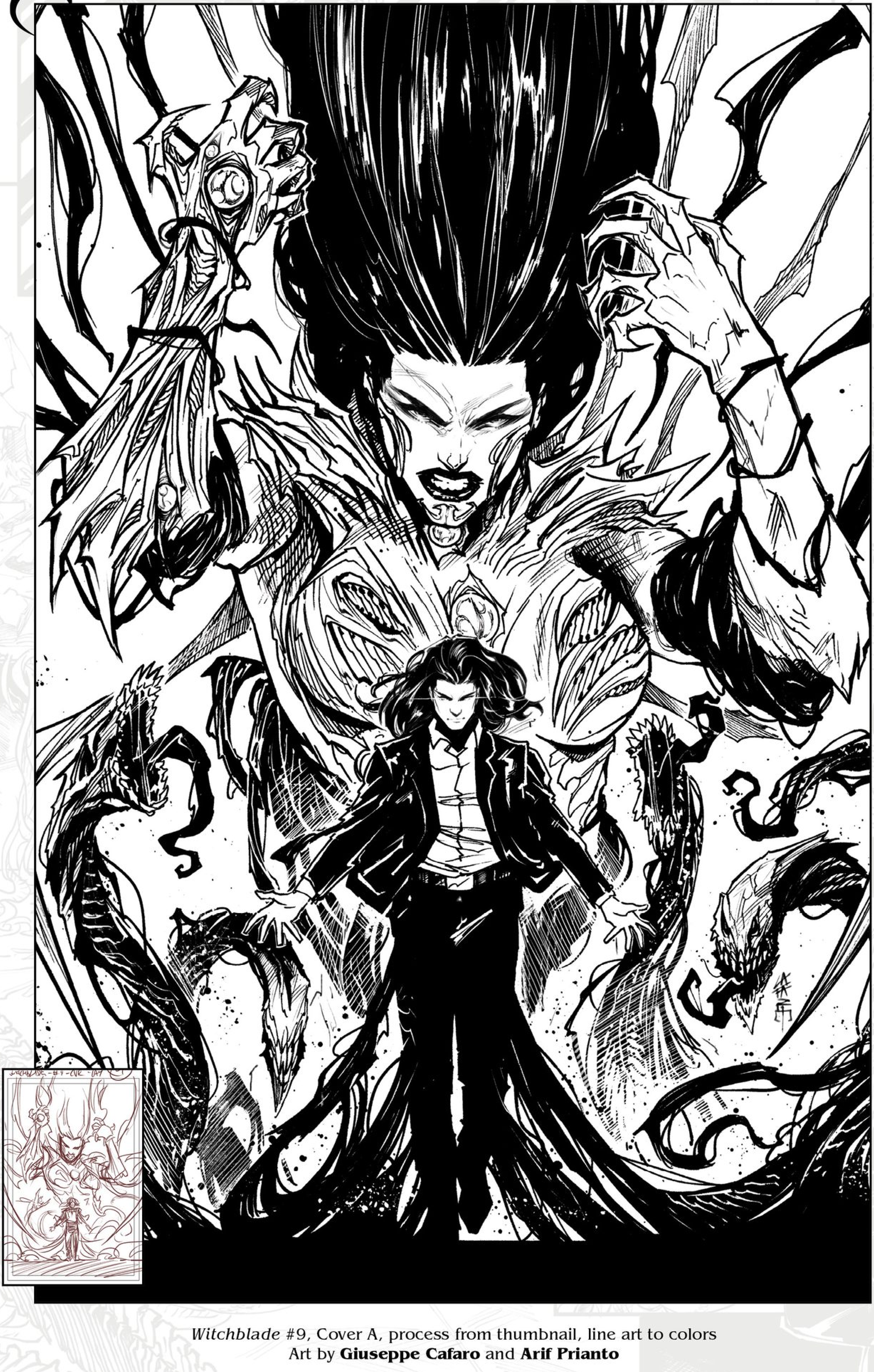

"...IT'S HIS DEVIL."
TO BE CONTINUED...

NEXT ISSUE!

"ME AND MY CHAUFFEUR BLUES"

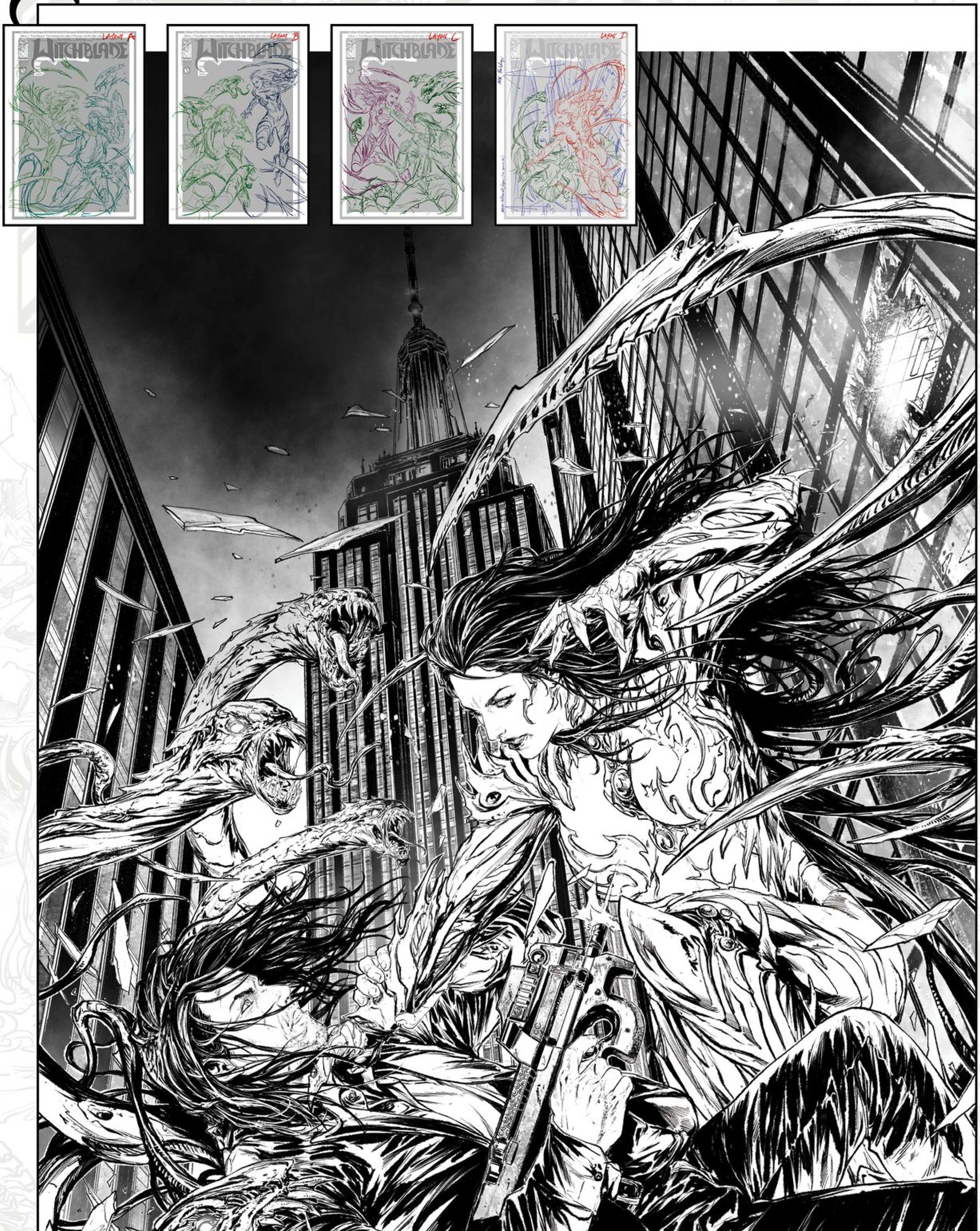


WITCHBLADE #9 Gallery • Cover A Process



Witchblade #9, Cover A, process from thumbnail, line art to colors
Art by **Giuseppe Cafaro** and **Arif Prianto**

WITCHBLADE #9 Gallery • Cover B Process


Layout A
Layout B
Layout C
Layout D
WITCHBLADE

Witchblade #9, Cover B, process from thumbnail, line art to colors
Art by **Raymond Gay** and **Arif Prianto**

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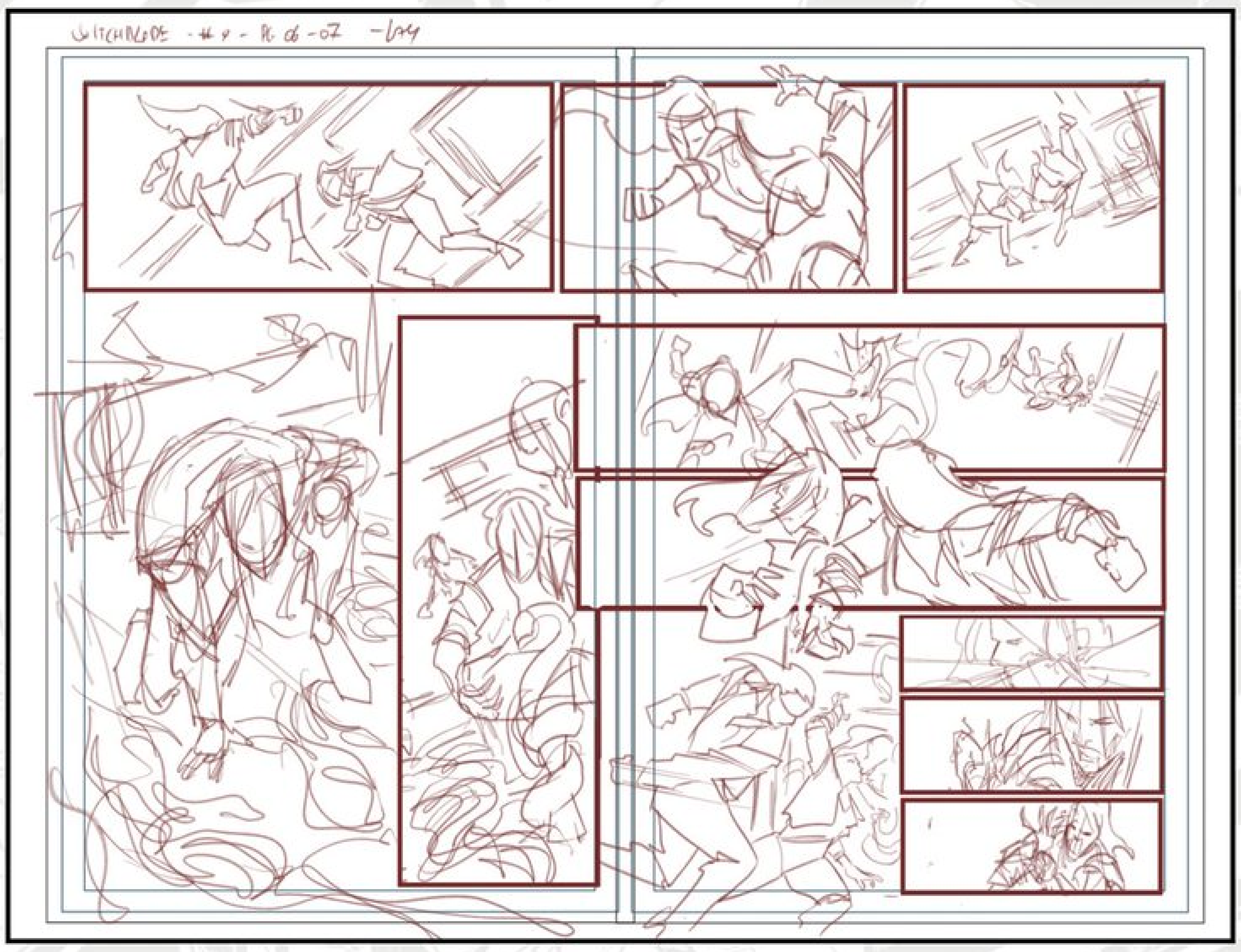
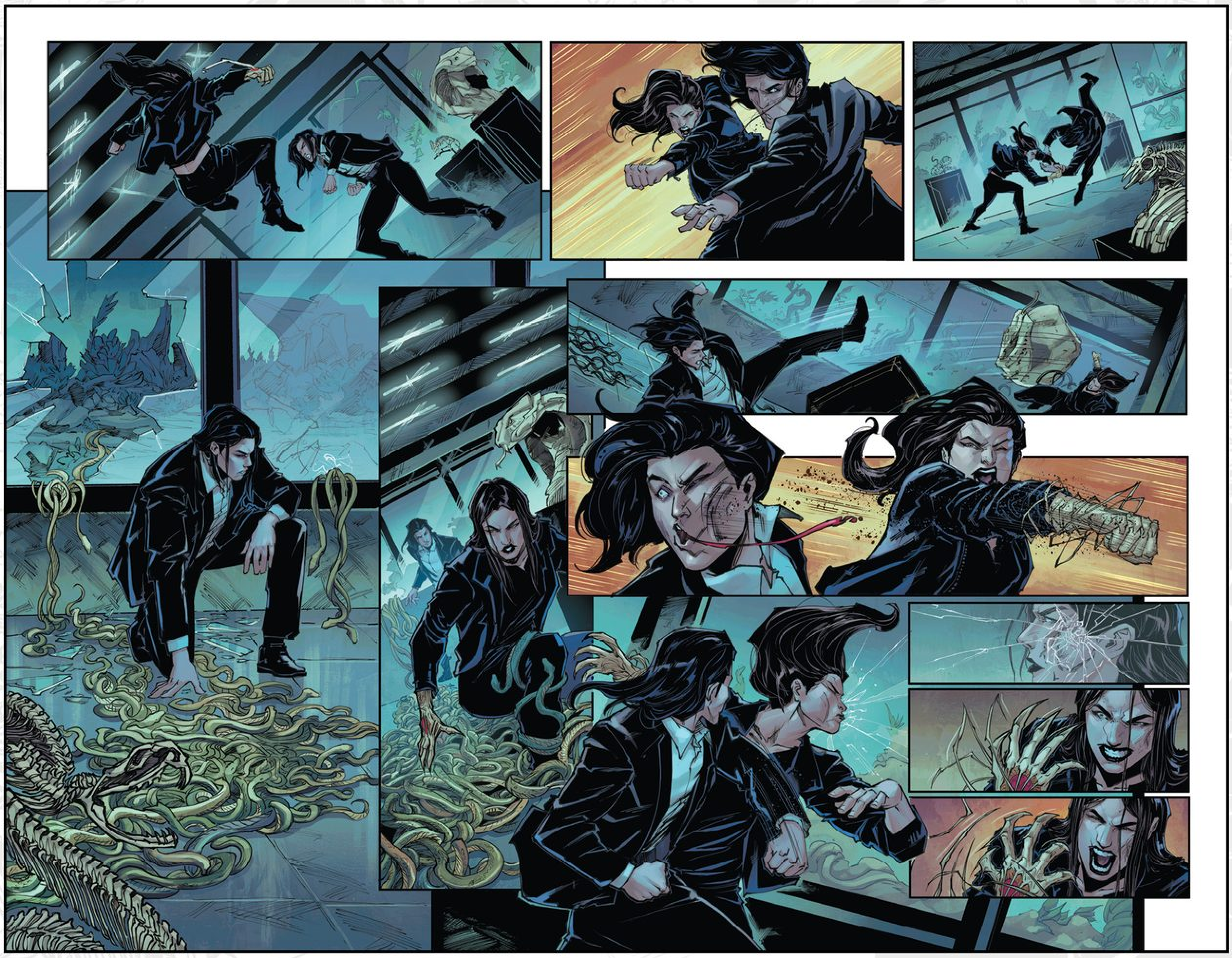
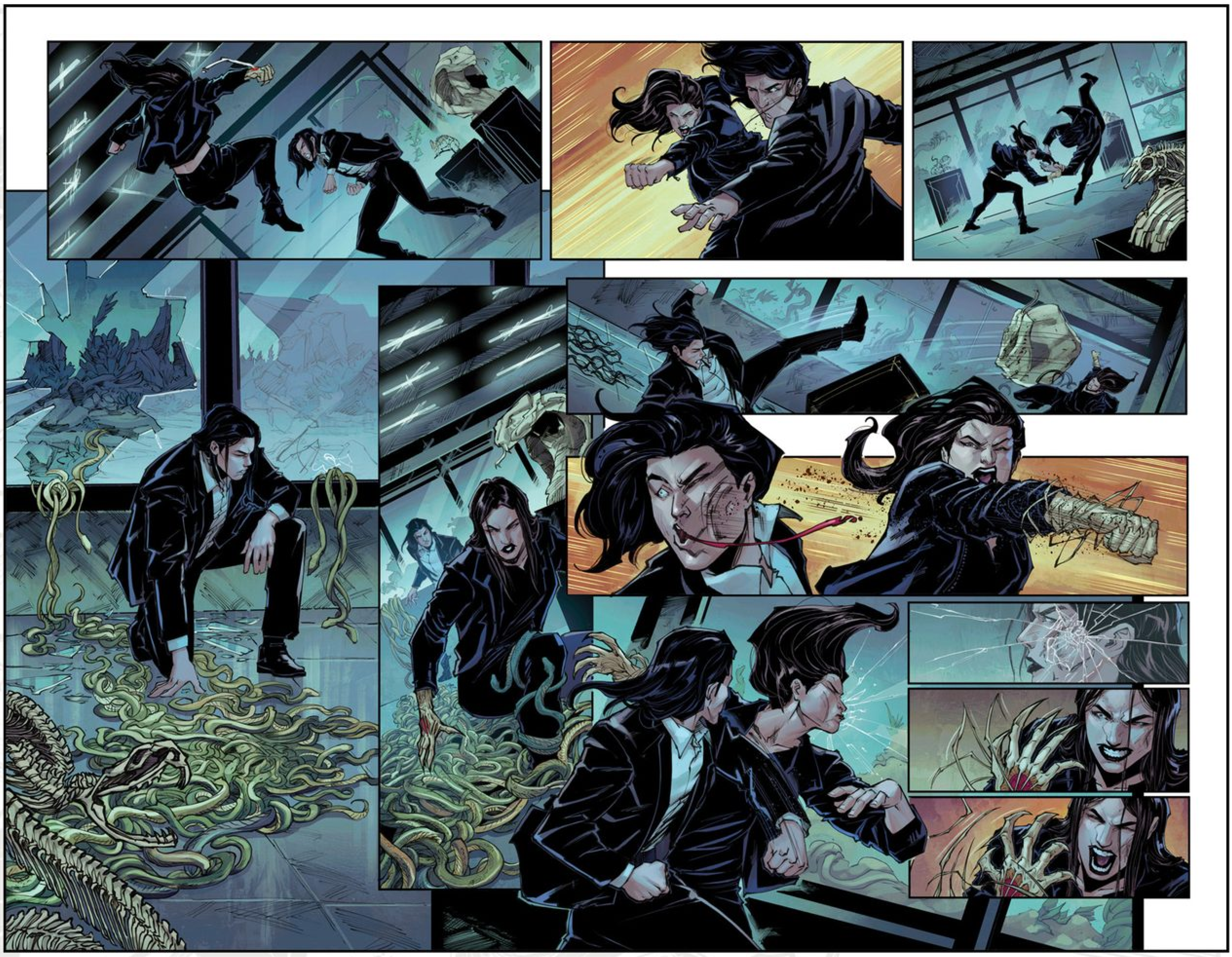
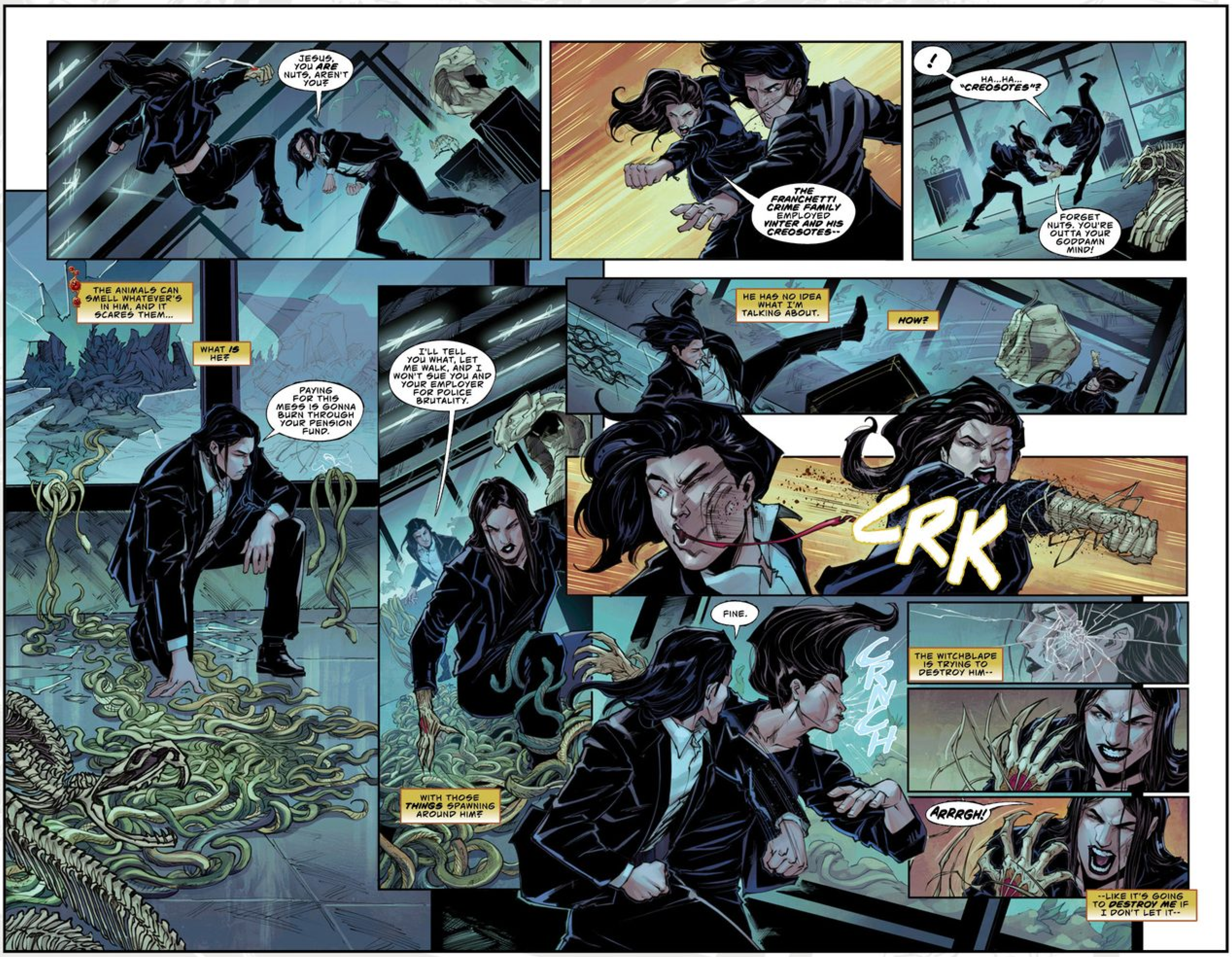
#9 Gallery • Page Process


WITCHBLADE - #9 - PG 06-07 -



Witchblade #9, pages 6-7, process from thumbnails, line art, colors to letters




JESUS, YOU *ARE* NUTS, AREN'T YOU?
THE FRANCHETTI CRIME FAMILY EMPLOYED *VINTER AND HIS CREOSOTES*--
!
HA...HA... *"CREOSOTES"*?
FORGET NUTS. YOU'RE OUTTA YOUR GODDAMN MIND!
THE ANIMALS CAN SMELL WHATEVER'S IN HIM, AND IT SCARES THEM...
WHAT *IS* HE?
PAYING FOR THIS MESS IS GONNA BURN THROUGH YOUR PENSION FUND.
I'LL TELL YOU WHAT, LET ME WALK, AND I WON'T SUE YOU AND YOUR EMPLOYER FOR POLICE BRUTALITY.
WITH THOSE *THINGS* SPAWNING AROUND HIM?
HE HAS NO IDEA WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT.
HOW?
CRK
FINE.
CRNCH
THE WITCHBLADE IS TRYING TO DESTROY HIM--
ARRRGH!
--LIKE IT'S GOING TO *DESTROY ME* IF I DON'T LET IT--

Creative Team

Marguerite Bennett is a GLAAD-nominated, *New York Times*-bestselling comic book writer based in Los Angeles.

Her credits include DC Comics' *Bombshells, Batwoman* and *RWBY*, along with *Animosity*, *Horde*, and *Insexts* through Aftershock Comics, and *MOTHER OF MADNESS* with *Game of Thrones* superstar Emilia Clarke for Image Comics. She has written *Mighty Morphin Power Ranger*s for Boom Studios, *Josie and the Pussycats* through Archie, *A-Force* and *Years of Future Past* at Marvel, *Red Sonja* and *Sheena* from Dynamite, and the indie horror darling *The Lot* for Bad Idea.

She is the lead writer of *Ark: The Animated Serie*s from Studio Wildcard.

Giuseppe Cafaro is an Italian artist who is based in Caserta, Italy. He started his professional career with the Italian publisher GGStudio, and right after, in 2012, he started to work for Aspen Comics on books like *Soulfire, Fathom: Kiani* and *Trish out of Water*, and Zenescope Entertainment as a cover artist for several years.

He worked over the last 10 years with other publishers, like DC Comics, on *Suicide Squad* and *Catwoman*, and Dynamite Entertainment, on *Red Sonja* and *Vampirella*. He also worked on graphic novels for Boom Studios based on the *Power Rangers* franchise.

In 2021, he collaborated with Tim Seeley and Steve Orlando on *LOADED BIBLE* for Image Comics. Also, he worked on some short stories for Heavy Metal with Blake Northcott and with Phil Smith for the book *Brik Jones: Attorney for Earth*, for his publisher Fighting Lion Comics.

Arif Prianto followed his dreams of working in comics and began his career as a professional colorist in 2007. Since then he has worked on titles from Top Cow Productions, Inc on *WITCHBLADE, THE DARKNESS*, for DC on *Batman & The Joker, Dark Knights of Steel,* and for Marvel on *Venom* and *Spider Woman*. He says that coloring comics is "the best job ever!"

Troy Peteri has lettered everything from *The Avengers, Iron Man, Wolverine, Amazing Spider-Man* and *X-Men* to more recent titles such as *WITCHBLADE, CYBERFORCE,* and *Batman/Wonder Woman: The Brave & The Bold*.

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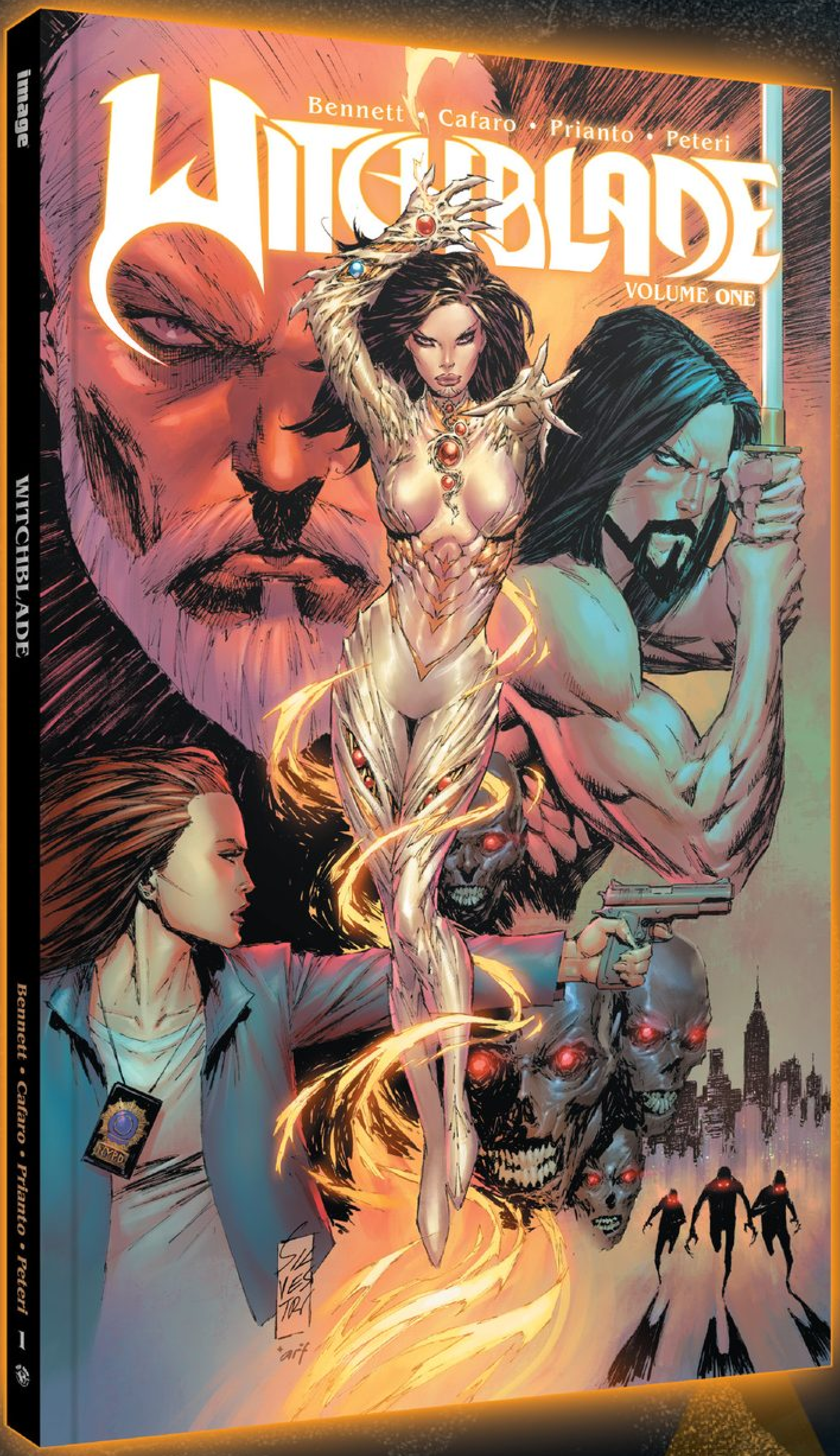
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WITCHBLADE
VOLUME **ONE**

"Hard-boiled supernatural noir hypercharged for the 21st century."
—Kieron Gillen
(DIE, PHONOGRAM)

"Writer Marguerite Bennett continues a meticulous re-imagining of an enduring indie comics hero..."
Grade A – *You Don't Read Comics*

"It is hard to hit the right balance when rebooting a series. The creative team needs to walk the tightrope of introducing fresh ideas while not ignoring the established lore. Bennett and her team have done just that with WITCHBLADE (#1)."
9.1/10 – *Geek'd Out*

"An origin story that hits hard and fast! Bennett and Cafaro's WITCHBLADE is a gritty and exciting reimagining that leaves you desperately wanting issue two!"
– Chip Zdarsky
(SEX CRIMINALS, Batman)

The first volume of a new WITCHBLADE series combines a reimagined origin with contemporary takes on familiar characters and new story arcs that rekindle the energy and excitement that fueled the '90s Image Revolution, which shaped generations of top creators.

New York City Police Detective Sara Pezzini's life was forever fractured by her father's murder. Cold, cunning, and hellbent on revenge, Sara now stalks a vicious criminal cabal beneath the city, where an ancient power collides and transforms her into something wild, magnificent, and beyond her darkest imaginings. Electrified with power, strength, healing, pleasure, and rage, every temptation lures her from her mission to find her father's killer. Sara thinks she possesses the Witchblade—but does it possess her?

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This volume also includes an exclusive three-page teaser featuring another pillar of the Top Cow Universe, **THE DARKNESS!**

First printing introductory price of only $9.99 • Collects WITCHBLADE (2024) #1-6+#1/2
200 pages • Full Color • T+/Teen Plus • Lunar Order Code: 1124IM272 • ISBN: 978-1-5343-6060-0

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WITH LETTERS BY

TROY PETERI

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WHERE MYTH IS MADE MANIFEST,
AND ANCIENT MONSTERS ROAM.

In the chaotic and horrific trenches of WWI, where life was fleeting, and death was only a breath away, an outcast finds his purpose through a curse he struggles to control. This is Kano Barnett, a young half-Native-American from the Pacific Northwest who has volunteered to join the army during the First Great War and finds himself on the front lines of Belgium in 1917. Here, he not only learns how to fight but also discovers that an amulet, made of silver from a sacred lake has imbued him with the power of his spirit animal, the Black Bear. As the war intensifies, No Man's Land becomes more than a blood-soaked battleground, it becomes Kano's hunting ground as he transforms into a hybrid predator unlike any the world has ever seen.

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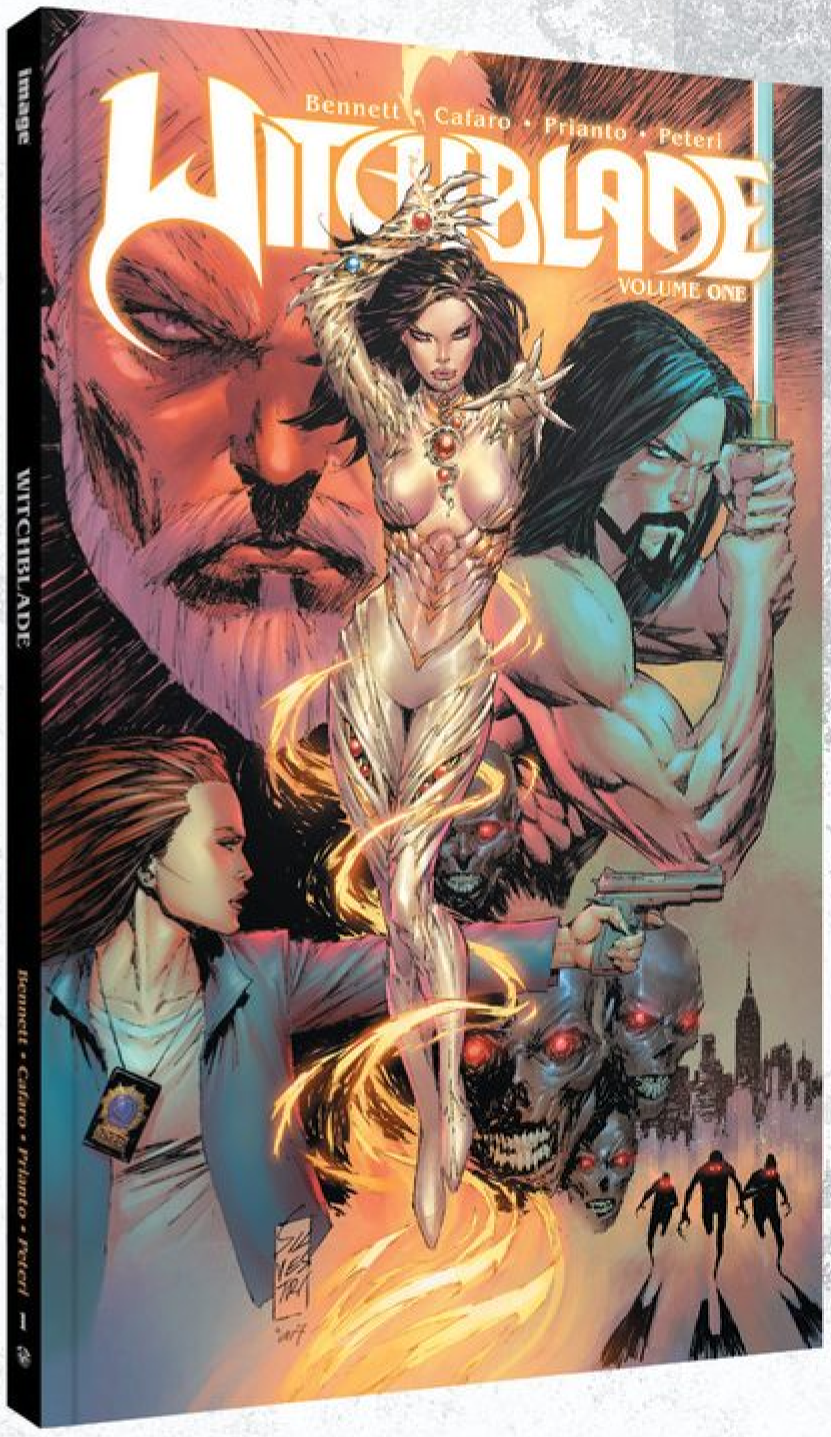
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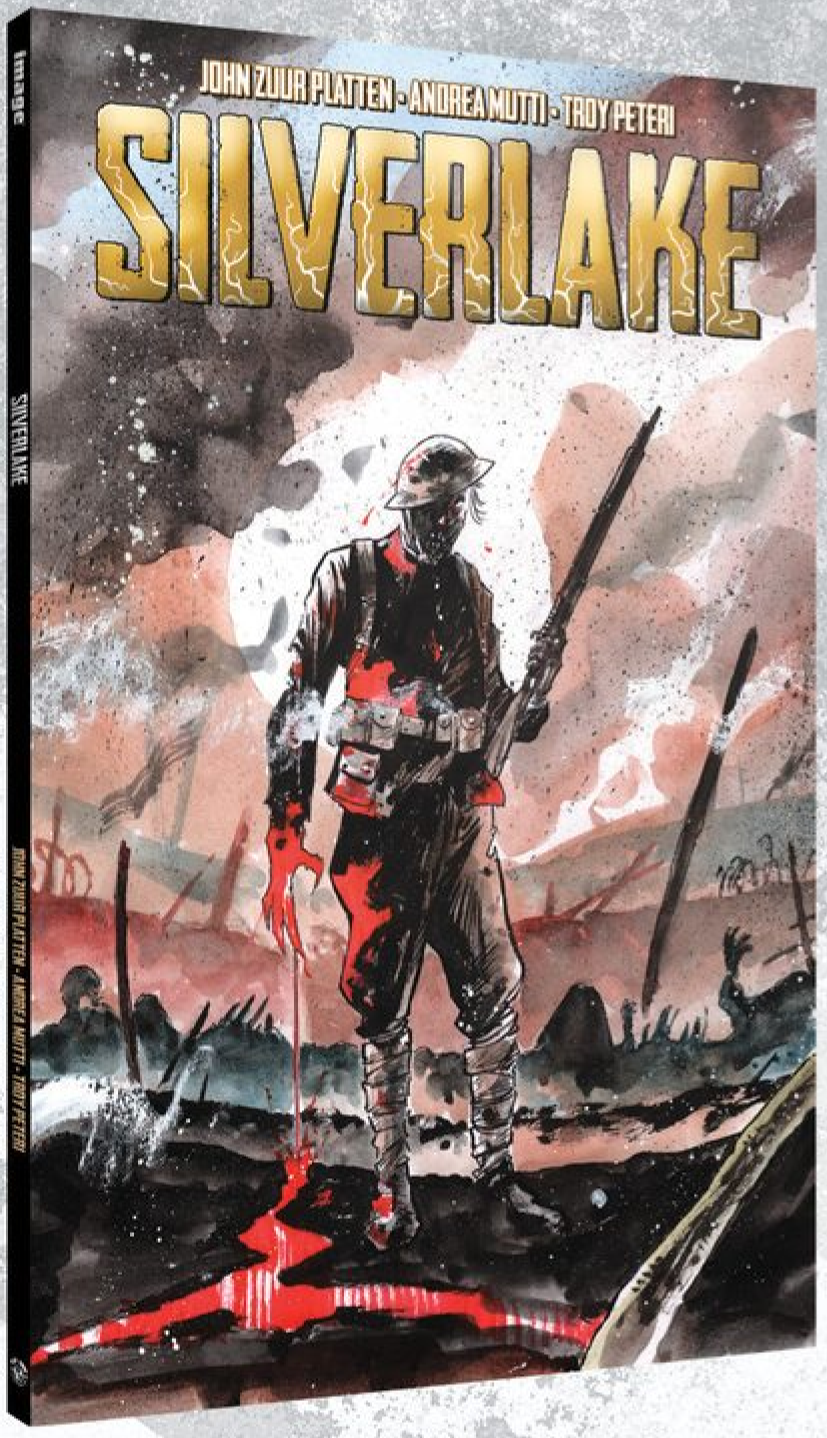
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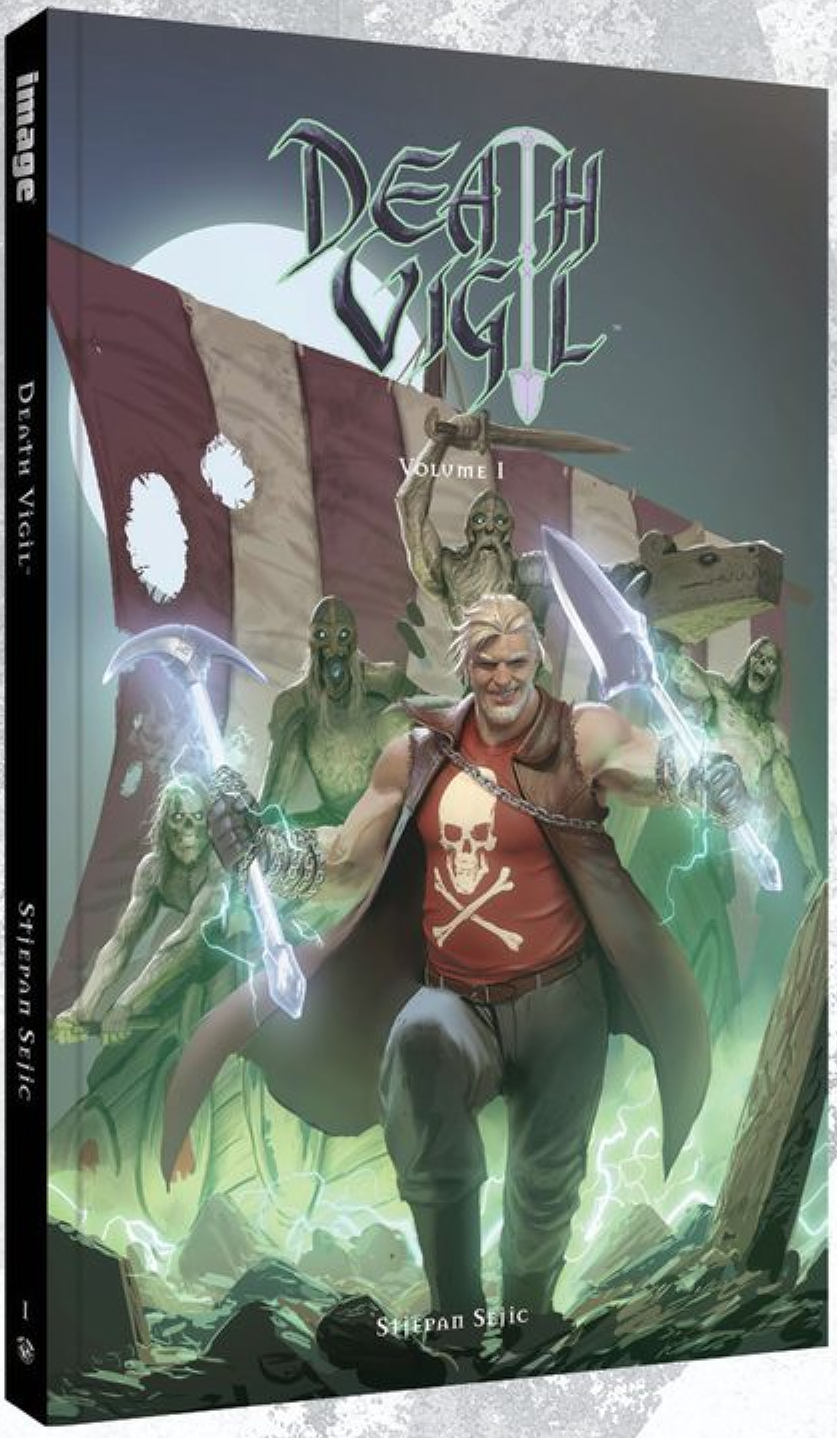
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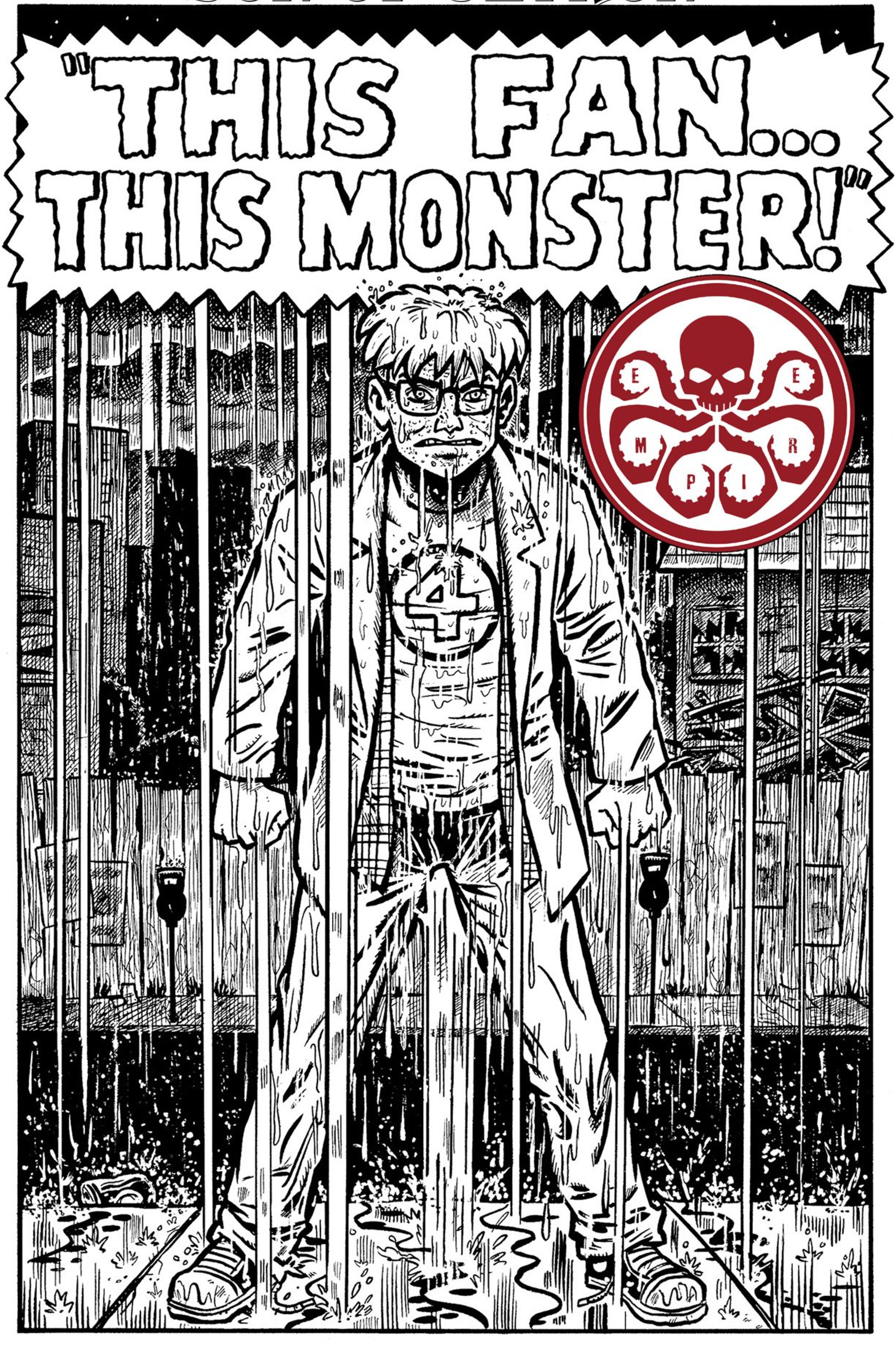

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